WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY - 1988

Town of Westlock
Economic Development Committee
June, 1988

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Westlock Employer Survey - 1988 represents the effort and cooperation of many people and organizations that serve the Town of West ock. It was undertaken by the Town of Westlock Economic Development Committee in cooperation with Town Council, the Westlock and District Chamber of Commerce, Alberta Social Services and Alberta Municipal Affairs Planning Branch.

The survey was designed with input from: Marjorie Ducharme, Chairman of the Westlock Economic Development Committee; Ron Campbell, Town Manager; Al McCully and Blair McDowell, Alberta Municipal Affairs; Andrew Loosley, Alberta Social Services; Ernie Polowy, Alberta Economic Development and Trade; Yvonne McFadzen, Alberta Bureau of Statistics; and Bob Sank, Grant MacEwan Community College. The Town of Westlock distributed the survey. The data was tabulated and analyzed by Andrew Loosley of Alberta Social Services, with the assistance of David Lo, computer systems analyst. Also instrumental in the survey were Don Fleming, Mel Kuprowsky and Gary Duke of Alberta Social Services, and Cheryl Stanley of the Town of Westlock. The final report was produced by the Planning Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs. Brady Harrison wrote the text and Ann McIntosh prepared the graphics and layout. Verle House typed the report. The project was coordinated by Al McCully.

The cooperation of the Westlock area employers who took the time to offer their ideas and suggestions, and return the survey is gratefully acknowledged.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In February, 1988, Town Council, the Westlock and District Chamber of Commerce, the Westlock Economic Development Committee, Alberta Social Services and Alberta Municipal Affairs conducted an employer survey in Westlock and the surrounding area (8km radius). The purpose of the survey was to develop a "snapshot" of recent trends in Westlock's business and public sectors, obtain benchmark information on what is happening now, and identify future development opportunities and prospects.

EMPLOYER PROFILE

1. The majority of Westlock employers operate in the following three economic sectors: retail trade (22.6%), wholesale trade (15.1%), and business and personal services (15.1%).

2. The primary market area for 87% of Westlock employers is the Town and M.D. of Westlock. Other towns (including Athabasca, Barrhead, and Thorhild) are the primary market area for 19% of the employers.

3. The main competition for over half (61%) of employers is other local businesses and organizations. For 19%, however, Edmonton is the source of most competition, while 12% report their competition originates in other nearby towns.

4. Although nearly 75% of the employers have been in operation in Westlock for six or more years, there is a healthy profile of recent, medium-term and long-term businesses and agencies. The breakdown is as follows: 11 years or more in business (45%); 6 to 10 years (28%); 3 to 5 years (12%); and 2 years or less (14%).

SALES TRENDS AND SOURCES

5. For most Westlock businesses sales trends between 1985 and 1987 have been positive. The 1987 sales appear to be significantly better than those of 1985, and also somewhat better than those of 1986. In 1987, 72% of employers had higher receipts than in 1985, and 39% reported sales' increases (11% or greater) above the rate of inflation over the two year period. The 1987 gross sales were higher than those of 1986 for 58% of the employers, and 34% of the employers' sales increases were 11% or greater over the one year period.

6. When gross sales over the same time period, 1985-1987, are cross-tabulated by economic sector, most of the ten sectors reporting show positive trends. Sixty percent of the sectors (including health, construction, business/personal services, agriculture, and wholesale trade) 1987 gross sales are up from those of 1986. Twenty percent of the sectors (finance/insurance/real estate and manufacturing) are down, and 20% are about the same including the food/accommodation and retail trade sectors. Ninety percent of the economic sectors report 1987 sales higher than 1985 sales. Only the 1987 health sector receipts were lower than those of 1985.

7. The source of sales receipts or the primary market sectors for most employers are, in order of magnitude: (i) urban and rural households, (ii) farm operations, and (iii) businesses/contractors/industry. Relatively few businesses derive their sales from the three other market sectors of government agencies/institutions, highway traffic, and tourists. These last three sectors also represent low percentages of gross sales.

EMPLOYMENT

8. Most employees are full time (72%) and the majority are employed in the following three economic sectors: education (29%), retail (15%), and health (15%). Part time employees account for 28% of the total 1165 employees

9. Over one-fifth of the employers currently require additional staff. Employers report an existing need for 45 additional staff, primarily in the areas of: trades, retail sales and service, and labour.

10. Thirty-nine percent of the employers forecast a need for additional manpower over the next two years. Nearly 100 additional employees are required with skills primarily in the areas of: retail sales and service (33%), trades (26%), and clerical (19%).

SATISFACTION LEVELS

11. Employers' overall satisfaction level with being located in Westlock is very high. Eighty-five percent rated Westlock as good, very good, or excellent.

12. Most employers rated 13 out of 19 selected services and attributes of Westlock as being good or excellent. These services and the percentage of employers rating them as good or excellent include: education (76.4%), fire protection (74.5%), health and medical care (69.8%), neighbourliness and friendliness (68.8%), provincial/federal offices and programs (67%), police protection (65.1%), housing (approx. 63%), retail (61%), water and sewer systems (55.9%), Chamber of Commerce (54.8%), visual appearance (54.7%), Council (51.9%), and water and sewer (51%).

13. Smaller percentages of employers rated the following services and attributes as good or excellent: roads and highways (49.1%), size of Town (approx. 43%), cultural and recreational facilities (41.5%), cost of living (40.6%), provincial/federal offices and programs (33%), Economic Development Committee (32.7%), local M.P. (23.5%), and local M.L.A. (21.7%).

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF WESTLOCK

14. The most commonly reported advantages of operating a business or public sector agency in Westlock are: central to la·ge agricultural area; size of Town; proximity to Edmonton; good farming area; friendly community; stable local economy; and easier to know customers in a small town.

15. The most frequently expressed disadvantages to operating a business or public sector agency in Westlock are: proximity to Edmonton; lack of major industry in Edmonton; high percentage of seniors in Town; lack of concentrated business section; limited population; dependency upon agriculture; and long distance charges/shipping costs.

BUSINESS AND PUBLIC AGENCY NEEDS

16. Critical factors or prerequisites for Westlock employers to expand or diversify are identified as: increase in population of trade area; change in government fiscal policy; upturn in provincial economy; increased local construction; increase in farm income; increase in skilled tradesmen and qualified staff; increased sales; boom in oil industry; more work!; more industry in Westlock; increases in consumer spending; and "nuke" Edmonton.

17. Most employers requested assistance programs. Frequently mentioned needs include: marketing assistance (54%), information on government programs (49%), management (38%), expansion/diversification planning assistance, financial planning assistance (29%), and staff training (26%).

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

18. Opportunities may exist for existing businesses to increase sales receipts, expand or diversify by reducing leakage of retail and service trade dollars to competing centres. The following products and services are being purchased outside Westlock by some businesses and agencies due to lack of availability or price: office supplies, vehicles, building supplies, office competers, food, printing products, photo supplies and cameras, greenhouse supplies, insurance, refrigeration maintenance, furniture/office equipment, feed and cattle equipment, newspaper supplies, janitorial products, and automotive supplies.

19. Possible business opportunities and community service needs suggested by employers include: recreation complex/covered pool, slaughter house/packing plant, alfalfa plant, drive-through car wash, agriculture and technical/vocational school, bio-chemical plant, light manufacturing, jeweller and watch repair, garbage recycling, restaurants that deliver food, Community Futures Program, Management Assistance Program, office machine repair, shoe store, and another Employment Opportunity Program worker.

20. Tourism development proposals included: advertising in federal/provincial publications; improve Town attractiveness, especially along the highway; create a reason to stay or stop (e.g. Vegreville Easter Egg); promote local recreational areas and sponsor weekend jamborees; host annual events, business conventions and sports events; downtown directional signs; museum and park; Town camping area; improved tourist booth; upgrade Mountie Park campground; covered pool; historical theme park; waterslide; smile and be polite; summertime events like the promenade; and competitions recognizing businesses and employees who promote tourism well.

21. Nearly two-thirds of the employers would volunteer their services to assist business development in Westlock.

FUTURE PLANS AND PROSPECTS

22. Over the next one to two years many employers plan to further develop their operations. Thirty-six percent plan to expand, 32% plan to diversify and 30% plan to renovate. Thirty-four percent anticipate no change and 15% expect to move to new locations in Westlock. (Note: total exceeds 100% as several employers selected more than one option.)

23. Sixty-seven percent of employers rate the long-term prospects for business in Westlock as good or excellent, and 24% rated the prospects as satisfactory.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Efforts should be undertaken to expand Westlock's trade area and increase its market share, focusing on market areas beyond the Town and M.D. of Westlock.

2. Ways to reduce "leakage" of retail and service trade dollars to Edmonton should be explored.

3. Identify specific opportunities or "niches" in the Edmonton metropolitan area where Westlock has, or can create, competitive advantage and then market aggressively in the Edmonton area.

4. Encourage more businesses to get involved with providing products and services to: government and institutions, highway traffic, and tourists. Increase market share or volume of sales in these three sectors.

5. Use government agencies and trade and industry associations to assist with recruiting to meet existing manpower requirements. Identify the range of approaches available to attract and retain staff.

6. Discuss and develop staff and management training programs in cooperation with local secondary education officials, Further Education Council, outside post-secondary institutions (A.V.C., N.A.I.T., U. of A., etc.), training consultants, provincial/federal departments, and the Community Futures Committee. Continue support for the Management Assistance Program and encourage the creation of a Business Development Centre in Westlock.

7. Encourage the start-up and success of new locally-owned businesses by having the N.A.I.T. Centre for Entrepreneurship offer its entrepreneurship program in Westlock.

8. When promoting Westlock, include employer survey results showing that 85% of local businesses and public agency employers rate being located in Westlock as good, very good or excellent. Also promote employer's excellent rating for community's "neighbourliness and friendliness", and the very high satisfaction ratings for: education, medical, police and fire protective services. Employers high satisfaction levels with the Chamber of Commerce and Council should also be recognized.

9. Efforts should be directed to improving employers' satisfaction levels with: roads and highways, provincial/federal offices and programs, cultural and recreational facilities, size of Town, cost of living, the Economic Development Committee, M.P. and M.L.A.

10. Work with existing businesses and agencies and potential entrepreneurs to help determine the viability of the business and community service opportunities identified by this survey, and to identify other opportunities for business development in the Westlock area.

11. Consider preparation of a downtown development or revitalization plan, and a tourism action plan.

12. Increase business retention and new business creation by establishing and maintaining a list of businesses with surplus products/services and those requiring goods/services that aren't available locally, thereby matching local suppliers with local demand. Businesses with surplus products or services should contact the Town Economic Development Officer and the Alberta Economic Development and Trade Business Development Representative.

13. Enlist the services of the many employers who volunteered to assist with development of the business community.

14. Work closely with the numerous businesses intending to expand, diversify or renovate to facilitate the implementation of their plans.

15. Integrate the results of this survey with the Town's Economic Development Strategy.

16. Consider doing an employer survey again in 1990 to monitor change, evaluate economic development initiatives and to provide some insight as to business prospects for the early 1990's.

17. Develop and maintain a system to provide the following information (on at least an annual frequency): total number of employers and employees by sector, number of business start-ups and closures, and manpower requirements by sector and skill.

1. INTRODUCTION

In February, 1988, Town Council, the Westlock and District Chamber of Commerce, the Westlock Economic Development Committee, Alberta Social Services and Alberta Municipal Affairs conducted an employer survey in Westlock and the surrounding area (8km radius). The purpose of the survey was to develop a profile or "snapshot" of what is happening in the business and public sectors in Westlock, and to gain some insight from employers as to what may happen in the next 1-2 years.

More specifically, the survey identifies:

(1) recent gross sales trends;
(2) market area boundaries and competition sources;
(3) employment breakdown by sector;
(4) advantages and disadvantages of doing business in Westlock;
(5) employer needs;
(6) existing and future manpower and training needs;
(7) employer satisfaction levels;
(8) prospects for expansion and diversification; and
(9) possible business and service opportunities.

The results will give the Economic Development Committee and Council direction in assisting local business and in preparing an economic development strategy for the community. It is hoped the results will also be useful to businesses and agencies providing goods and services to the Westlock trade area in their economic development initiatives. Alberta Social Services will utilize the results in providing responses to manpower and training needs. The business needs expressed also provide valuable information to Alberta Economic Development and Trade staff in assisting small business development.

2. METHODOLOGY

The Westlock Employer Survey - 1988 was conducted with the support of Westlock Town Council and the Westlock and District Chamber of Commerce, the Westlock Economic Development Committee, Alberta Social Services, Alberta Economic Development and Trade, and Alberta Municipal Affairs. The twenty-one question, four page survey (see APPENDIX 3) was distributed through the mail by the Town of Westlock on February 5, 1988. Surveys were sent to approximately 400 Westlock and area (8 km radius) employers.

Completed surveys were returned through the mail or dropped off at the Westlock Town Office, or the Westlock District Office of Alberta Social Services. One hundred and six surveys were returned, a response rate was 26.5%. Thirteen surveys were received too late to be included in the tabulations or any part of this report.

The survey is not without limitations, largely due to lack of clarity of some questions and the inclusion of "open-ended" questions which allowed the respondent to provide an infinite number of different responses. Both shortcomings made tabulation and analysis more difficult, and in some instances produced inconclusive results. For example, the question on identification of primary market area directed respondents to specify if there is "more than one" primary market area, resulting in half the respondents picking the Town as the primary area and the other half the M.D. of Westlock.

Questions on advantages and disadvantages of operating in Westlock, and an identification of business opportunities were open-ended, producing a wide range of responses from some respondents and no answer from others. Similarly, the questions on satisfaction levels, contained no numerical scale for answers. As many variations of worded responses were generated (some unprintable), the survey analyst had to combine similar responses into numerical categories to facilitate graphic illustration of the data.

Although 106 questionnaires were analyzed, not all employers answered all the questions. The reader is therefore reminded that the analysis is based on the actual number of responses to that question, rather than the total number of questionnaires or respondents. Similarly, some questions permitted employers to provide responses to more than one option resulting in total percentages exceeding 100 percent.

In order to maintain confidentiality, many of the graphs in this report are based upon percentages and not actual numbers. No specific firm or organization is identifiable by the information contained in this report. Please note that percentages are generally rounded to the first decimal place.

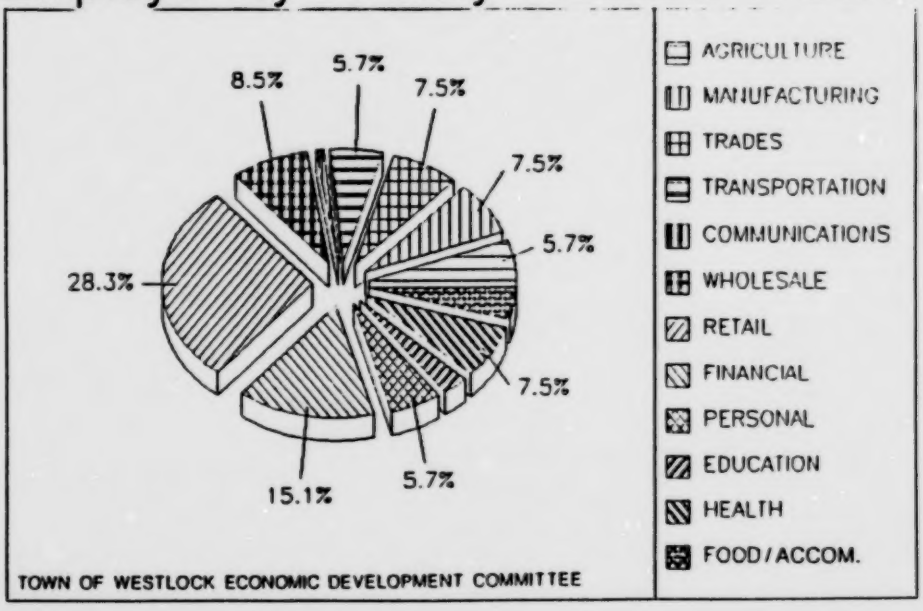
3. EMPLOYER PROFILE

A profile of Westlock employers can be produced by examining characteristics such: the percentage of employees by economic sector, their market area, the origin or location of their major competition, and the number of years in operation in Westlock.

3.1 Westlock Businesses and Organizations by Economic Sector

The largest number of employers, or 22.6% of all respondents, indicated their primary trade is in retail goods. A further 15.1% indicated they are in wholesale trades, a category that includes bulk fuel sales and farm equipment dealers. Another sector with as many employers as wholesalers is business and personal service. This category includes: lawyers, accountants, hairdressers, and such services as babysitting and lawn care. Other important sectors of the Westlock employer community include: manufacturing (8.5%), transportation (8.5%), construction (6.6%) and health (6.6%). All employers are categorized by sector (according to the Statistics Canada Standard Industrial Classification Manual) and their percentages shown on FIGURE 3.1. It should be noted that "government" does not appear as an employer because few responses were received from this sector.

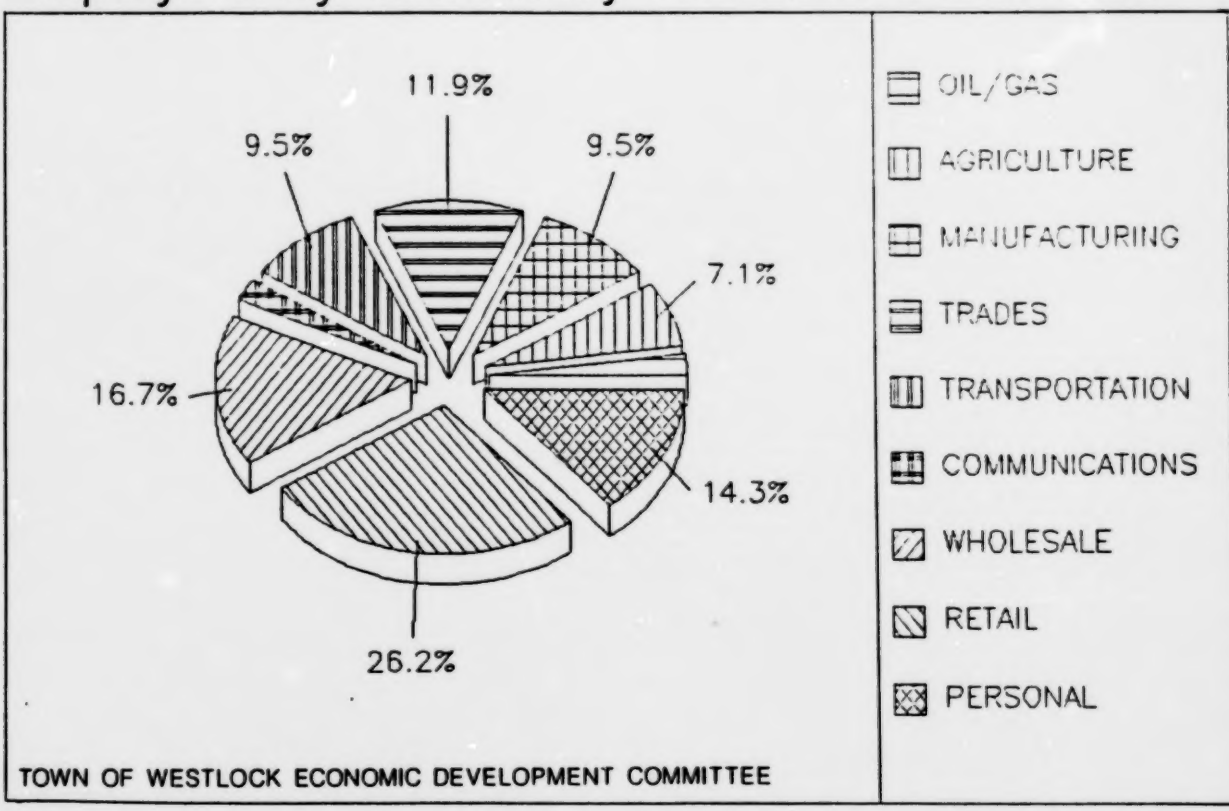
Figure 3.1
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Employer by Primary Products & Services



3.2 Secondary Products and Service

Employers were also asked to list their secondary product or service. While all 106 returned surveys listed a primary good or service, only 22 employers indicated a secondary trade (see FIGURE 3.2). An example of a business with a primary and secondary trade might be a construction firm that is also involved in some general trucking or wholesaler who has a small retail outlet. The largest number of employers (31.8% of the respondents) indicated that their secondary trade is in retail goods. A further 18.2% of the respondent listed wholesale trade as their secondary product, while 13.6% listed construction, or trades such as carpentry and plumbing, as their secondary service. Other important secondary trades are manufacturing, agriculture, and business and personal service.

Figure 3.2
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Employers by Secondary Products & Services

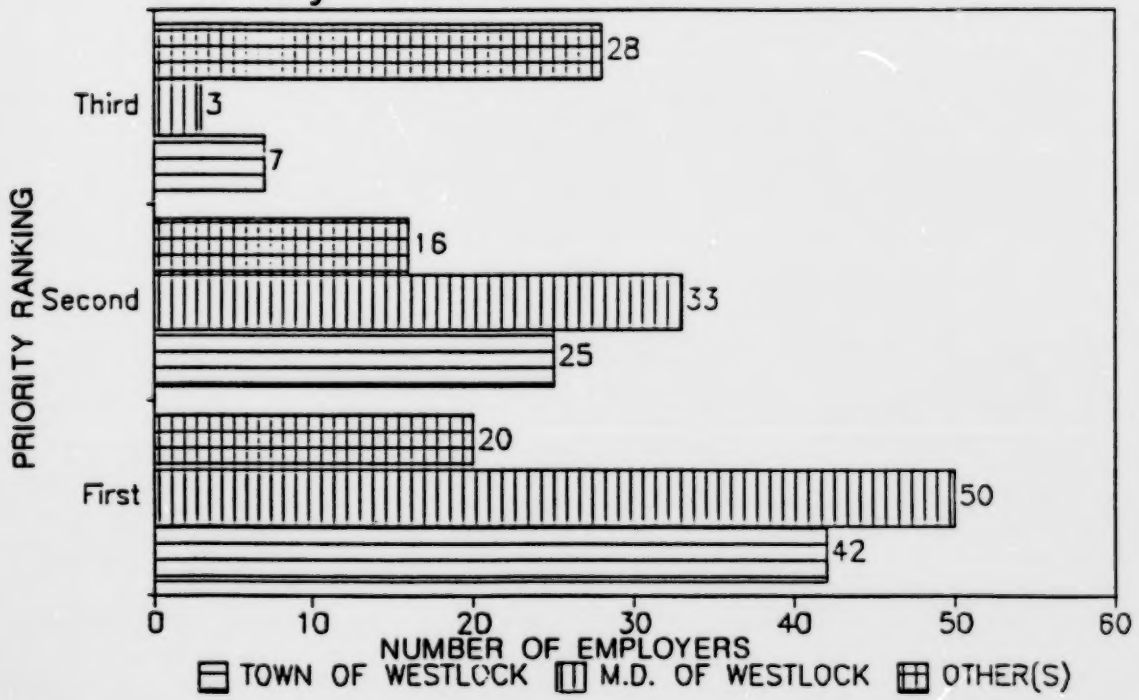


3.3 Primary Market Area

Employers were asked to rank their primary market areas on a scale of one to three. Due to problems with the wording of this question, there were differences in how respondents answered it. About 40% (42 employers) identified Westlock as their primary market area and 47% (50 employers) said the M.D. of Westlock is their primary market area (see FIGURE 3.3). Other towns including Athabasca, Barrhead and Thorhild accounted for the primary market area for 19% (20 employers).

When the second priority market areas are examined, 23% (25 employers) identified the Town and 31% (33 employers) the M.D. of Westlock. Therefore, despite the lack of clarity in the question (i.e. there can be only <u>one</u> primary market area per business/agency) the results demonstrate the primary market area for the vast majority of employers is the Town and the M.D. of Westlock. This may also indicate that Westlock's overall trade area may not be as large as previously thought (see <u>Westlock Shopper Survey - 1984</u>).

Figure 3.3
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Primary Market Area

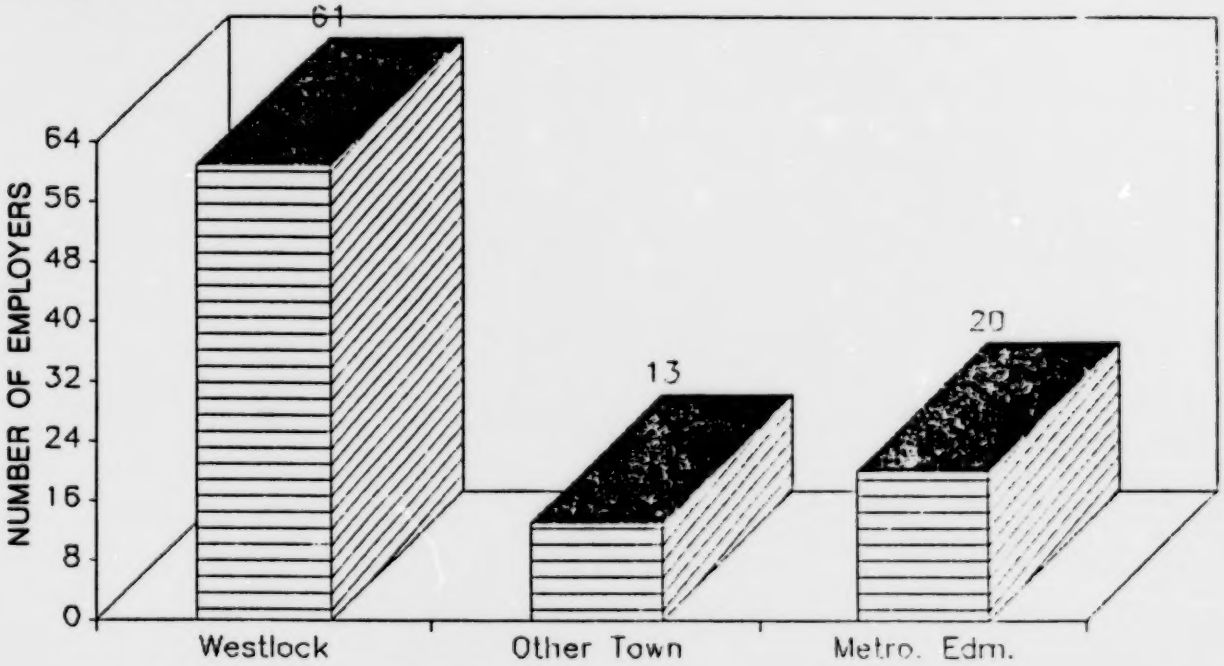


TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

3.4 Location of Competition

Most employers reported the majority of their competition to be Westlock. Over half (61%) of the businesses and other employers responded that other local businesses/organizations are their main competition for market share (see FIGURE 3.4). Twelve percent (13 employers indicated that other nearby towns are the source of their competition, while 19% (20 firms) stated most of their competition originates in Edmonton. Eleven percent (12 employers) did not indicate the source of their competition and have not been included on FIGURE 3.4.

Figure 3.4
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Origin of Competition



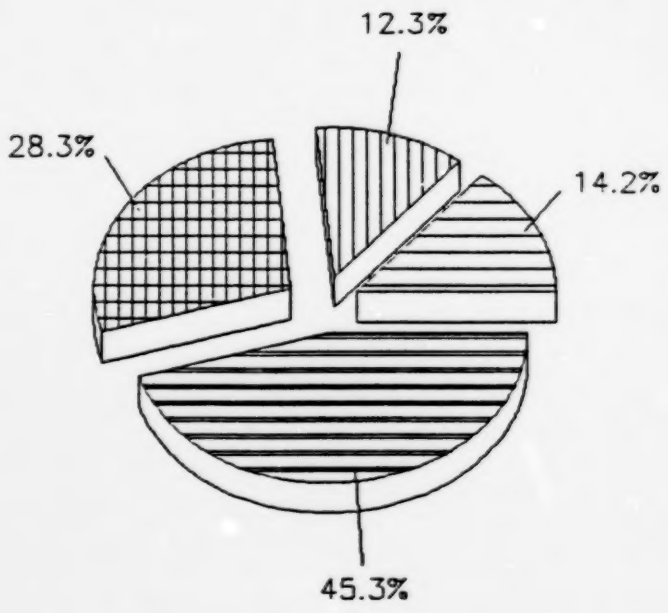
Note: Not all employers responded to this question

TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

3.5 Years of Operation in Westlock Area

Forty five (48 employers) have been in operation in the Westlock area for eleven or more years (see FIGURE 3.5). Twenty eight percent (30 employers) have operated for six to ten years, 12% (13 employers) for three to five years, and 14% (15 employers) for less than two years. Therefore, nearly 75% of the employers have been in business more than the first six critical years and about 25% less than six years.

Figure 3.5
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Years of Operation in Westlock



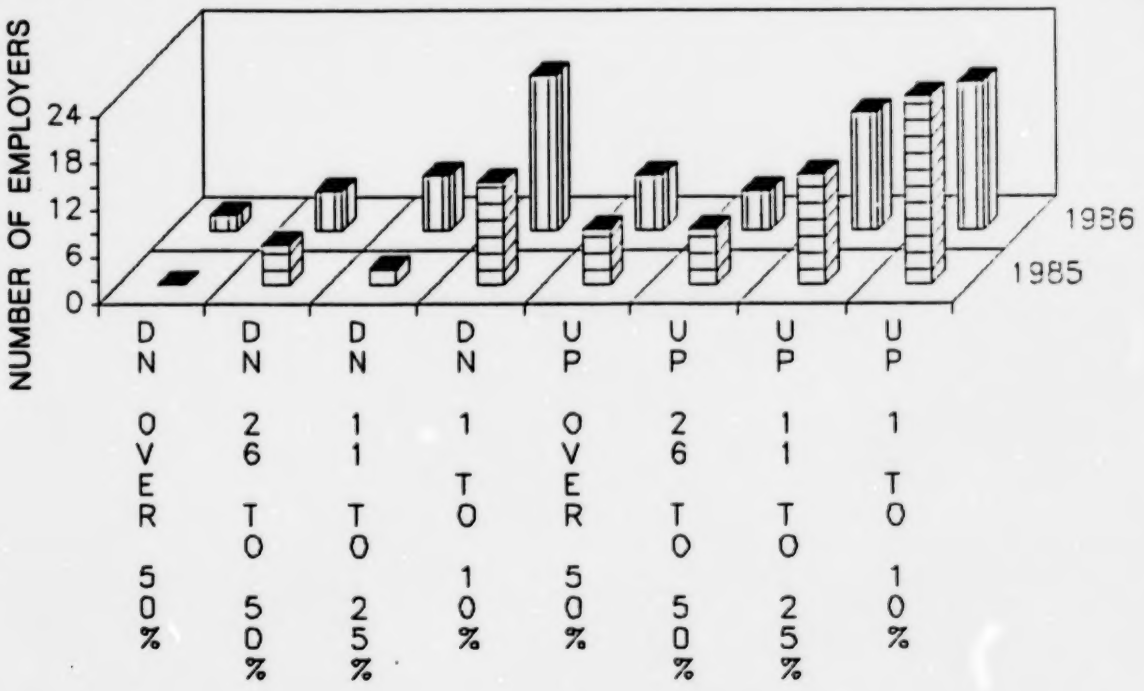
TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

4. SALES TRENDS AND SOURCES

4.1 Comparison of 1987 Gross Sales With 1986 and 1985

The sales trends over the last three years have been positive for the majority of Westlock employers. It appears that 1987 sales were significantly better than those of 1985, and also better than those of 1986. For example, in 1987, 72% of employers had higher receipts than in 1985 and 39% of the employers reported sales increases (greater than 11%) above the rate of inflation over the two year period. The 1987 sales were higher than those of 1986 for 58% of the employers, and 34% of the employers' sales increases were 11% or greater. The combined comparisons of 1985 and 1986 sales with 1987 are shown on FIGURE 4.1.

Figure 4.1
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
1987 Gross Sales Compared with 1986 & 1985



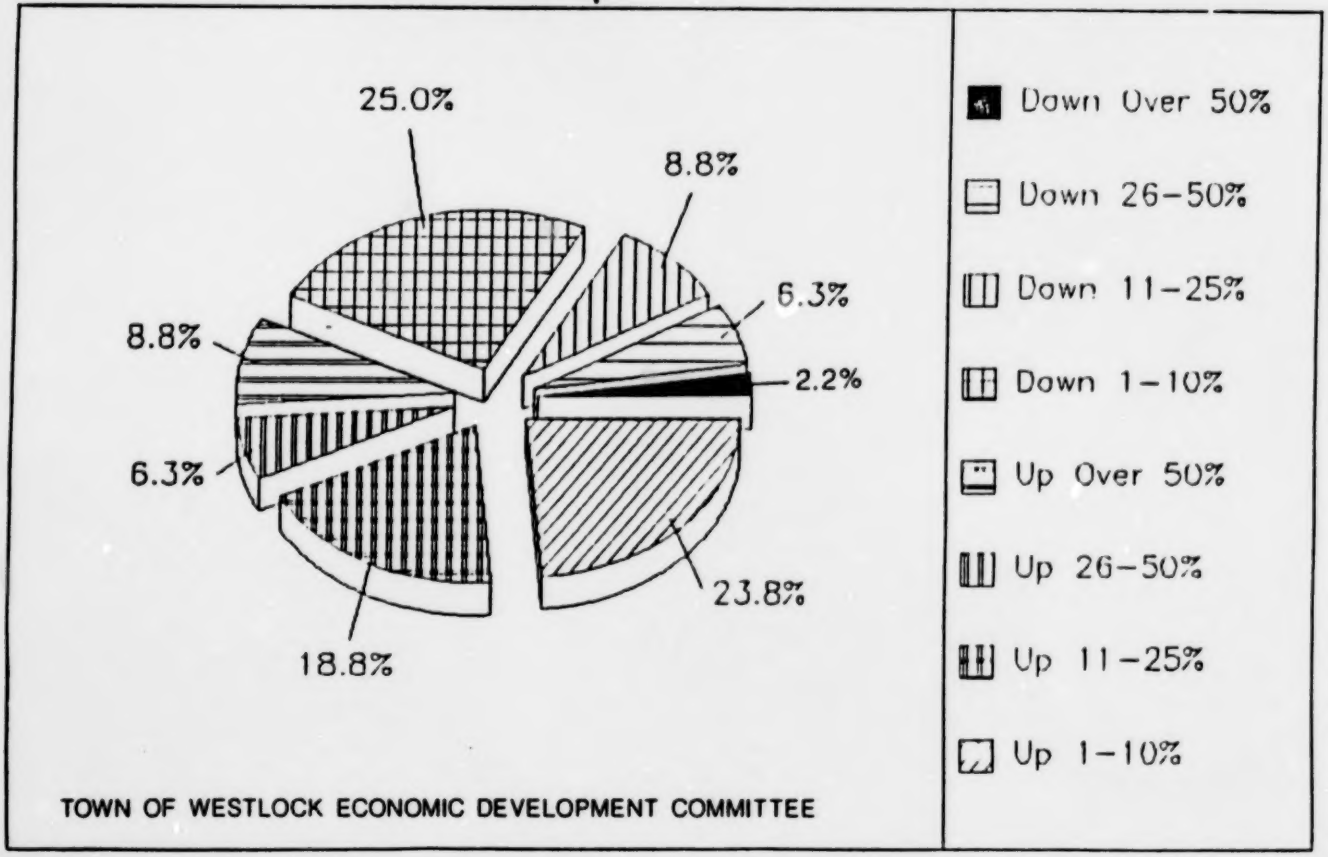
TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

4.2 Comparison of 1987 Gross Sales and 1986 Sales

When 1987's gross sales are compared with 1986's, nearly one-quarter (23.8%) experienced modest increases of 1-10%, and 18.8% had sales that were up 11-25% (see FIGURE 4.2). Gross sales rose a substantial 26-50% for 6.3% of employers, while sales are up over 50% for 8.8% of area businessses.

For one-quarter (25%) of Westlock employers, gross sales declined 1-10% from 1986 to 1987. An additional 8.8% of Westlock firms experienced an 11-25% drop in sales, and 6.3% of the respondents had sales that fell 26-50%. Less than 2% of employers reported sales down over 50%.

Figure 4.2
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
1987 Gross Sales Compared with 1986



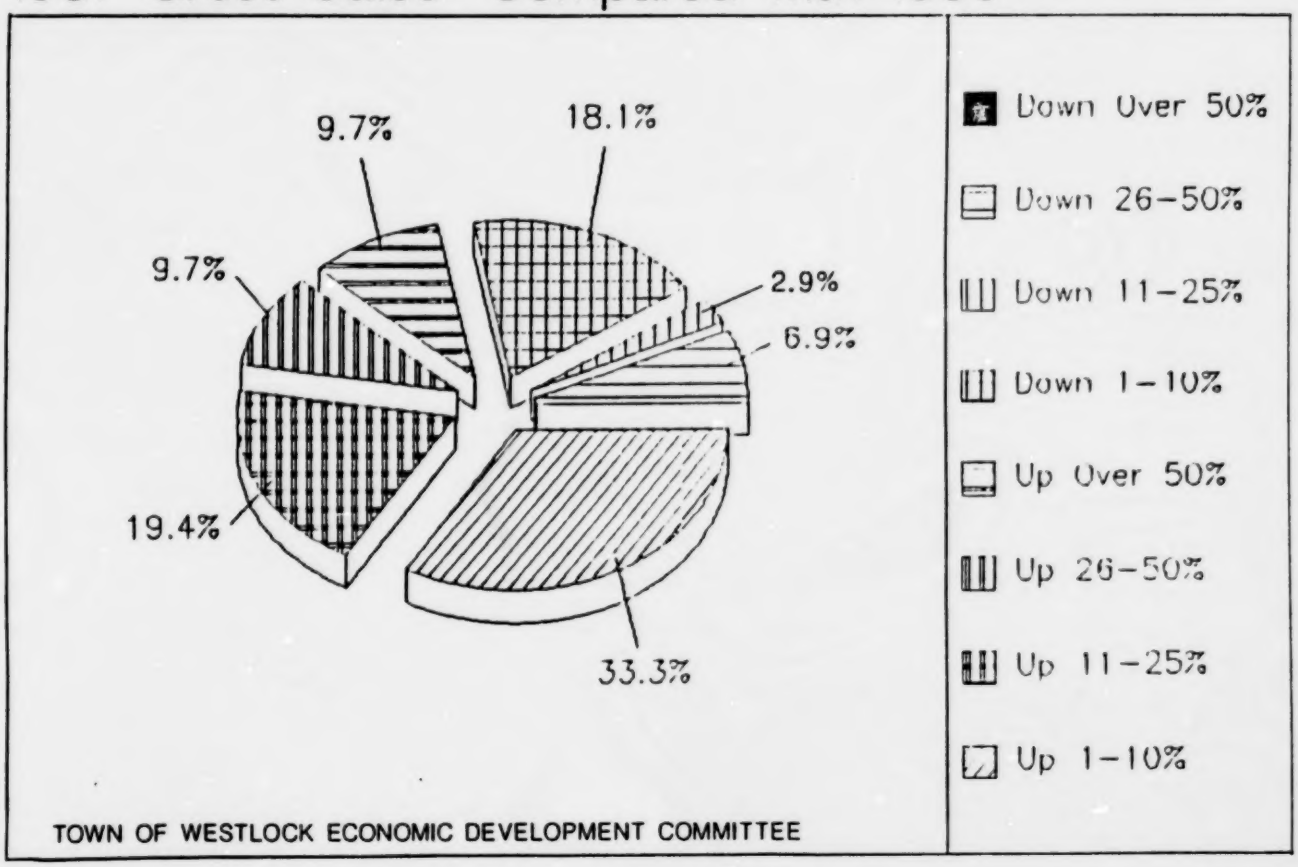
TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

4.3 Comparison of 1987 Gross Sales and 1985 Sales

When comparing 1987's gross sales with 1985's, one-third of the respondents reported that sales are up a modest 1-10% (see FIGURE 4.3). Nearly one-fifth (19.4%) of the employers indicated that sales are up from 11 to 25%, 9.7% reported that gross sales have increased a substantial 26-50%, and a further 9.7% stated that sales have risen over 50% from 1985.

Roughly one-fifth (18.1%) of Westlock area employers indicated that 1987 gross sales are down 1-10% from 1985. Less than 3% of employers experienced a 11-25% drop in sales, and only 6.9% have gross sales down 26-50%.

Figure 4.3
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
1987 Gross Sales Compared with 1985



4.4 Sales Trends by Economic Sector

When 1987 gross sales are compared with 1986 and 1985 gross sales and cross-tabulated by economic sector, some interesting trends emerge. For most of the ten economic sectors responding, the trend is positive. For 60% of the sectors (health, construction, business/personal service, agriculture, and wholesale trade) 1987 gross sales are up from those of 1986. Twenty percent of the sectors (finance/insurance/real estate and manufacturing) are down, and 20% are about the same (food/accommodation and retail trade).

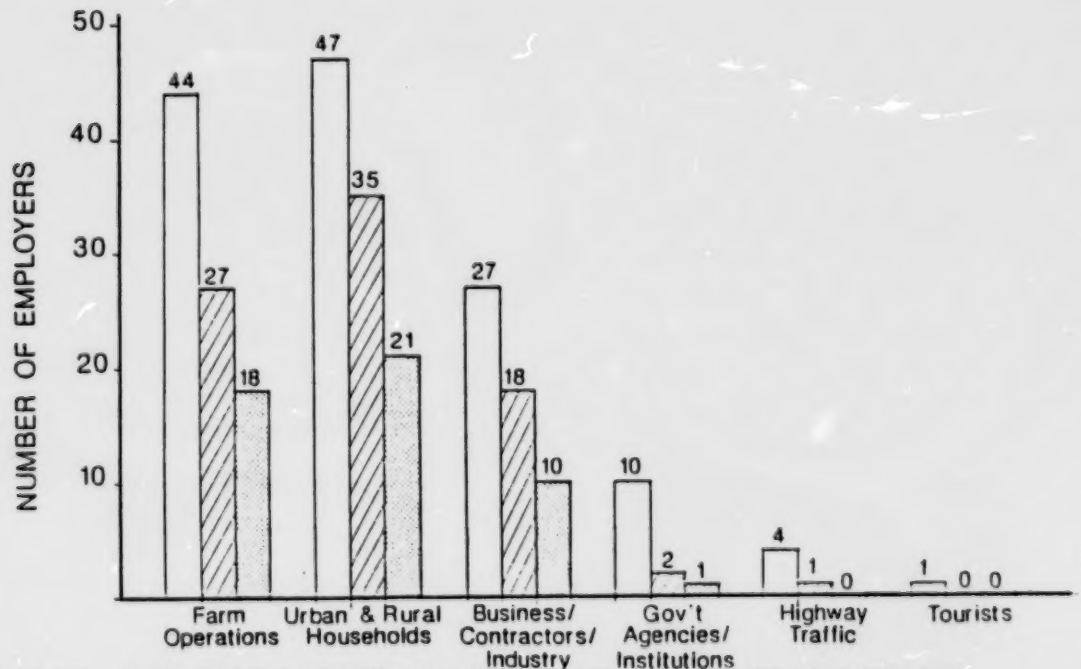
The 1987 sales trends appear even higher when compared with 1985 gross sales. Ninety percent of the economic sectors responding (food/accommodation, finance/insurance/real estate, manufacturing, construction, business/personal service, agriculture, retail trade, wholesale trade, and transportation) report 1987 sales to be higher than those of 1985. Only the health sector indicates 1987 gross sales to be lower than those of 1985. The economic sectors showing increases and decreases over the last three years and the percentage magnitude of change by sector are illustrated by numerous graphs in APPENDIX 1.

4.5 Sources of Gross Sales

Employers indicate their sales are derived from a variety of sources, including: farm operations, businesses/contractors/industry, government agencies/institutions, highway traffic, and tourists. FIGURE 4.4 reveals most employers derive their sales primarily from : urban and rural households, farm operations, and businesses/contractors/industry. Moreover, most employers obtain their highest percentages of sales from these three sources of business.

On the other hand, the responses indicate only a small minority of businesses derive their sales from the other three source categories (government agencies/institutions, highway traffic and tourists). These sources don't represent high percentages of gross sales. More detailed figures on percentage gross sales from the six selected sources are available in APPENDIX 2.

Figure 4.4
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Sources of Gross Sales



TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

5. EMPLOYMENT

This Chapter provides information on: (i) the total number of full and part time employees in Westlock; (ii) the numbers employed by economic sector; (iii) present manpower needs and skill requirements; (iv) and future manpower needs and skill requirements. Most employees are full time (72%) and the majority of these (59%) are employed in the following economic sectors: education (29%), retail (15%), and health (15%).

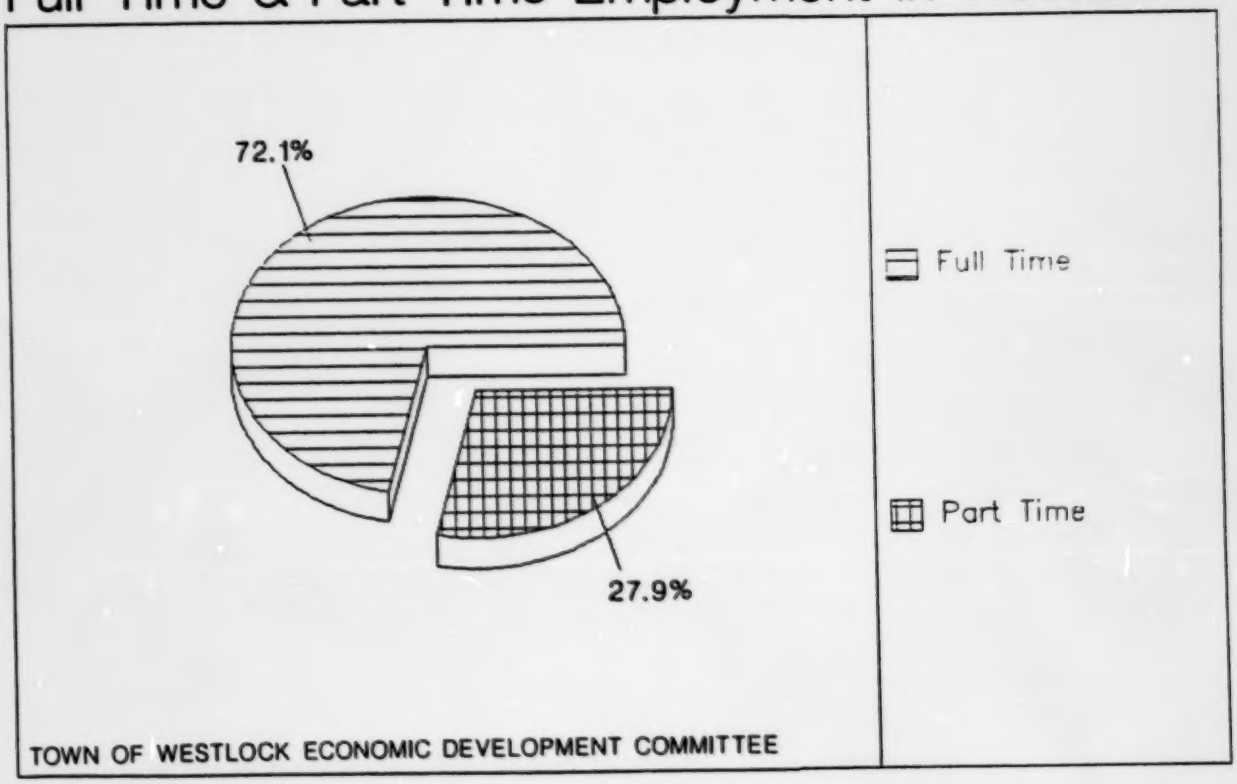
Part time employees constitute 28% of the total employees. About 70% of part time employees work in the health (42%), retail (15%), and education (14%) sectors.

Over one-fifth of the employers require additional staff. Employers currently need 45 additional staff, primarily in the areas of trades (44%) retail sales/service (20%) and labour (16%). Thirty-nine percent of employers forecast additional manpower requirements of nearly 100 employees over the next two years. The skills required of future staff forecast to be recruited over the next two years are primarily in the areas of: retail sales/service (33%), trades (26%), and clerical (19%).

5.1 Full Time and Part Time Employment in Westlock

Question 3 asked employers to indicate how many full time (30 hours or more per week) and part time people they employ. The one hundred and five employers who responded to this question employ 840 people full time and 325 part time. Of the total sample, therefore, 72.1% are employed full time, and 27.9% part time (see FIGURE 5.1).

Figure 5.1
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Full Time & Part Time Employment in Westlock

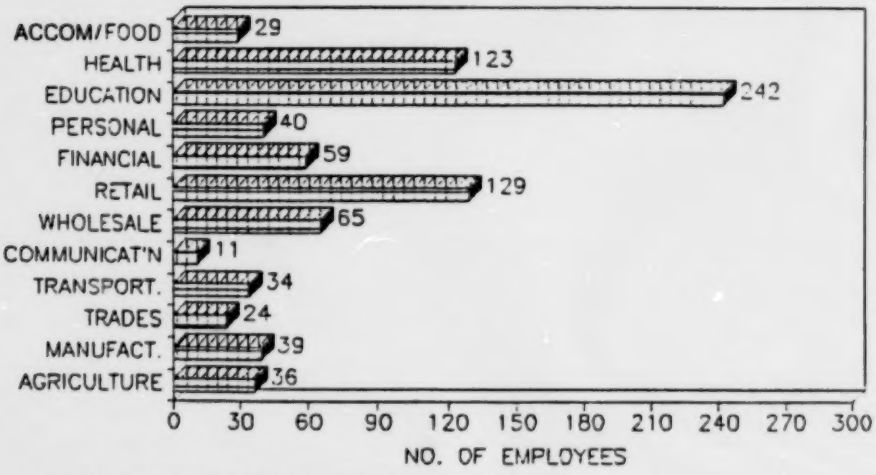


5.2 Employment by Economic Sector

The largest number of full time employees, 27.64% of the sample, are employed in the education sector (see FIGURE 5.2). A further 15.7% are employed in the health sector, and 13.2% work in retail trade. Another important source of employment is wholesale trade, accounting for 11.4% of the sample. Other significant sectors of employment are finance (7.7%), manufacturing (7.1%), business and personal service (4.0%), and accommodation and food (3.3%). For the sake of comparison, the 1987 Municipal Census for the Town of Westlock indicates the number of full time employees as 1289. Therefore, the sample obtained from the Westlock Employer Survey - 1988 of 840 full time employees represents approximately 65% of the full time labour force. (Please note that the Westlock Employer Survey - 1988 includes people employed outside the Town of Westlock, whereas the 1987 Municipal Census counted only those within the Town limits).

For the purposes of this report, all employees are considered to be employed in their business or organization's primary trade good or service. Although some employees may only be involved in a firm's secondary trade good or service (see FIGURE 3.2, CHAPTER 3), there is no way of determining this from the survey data.

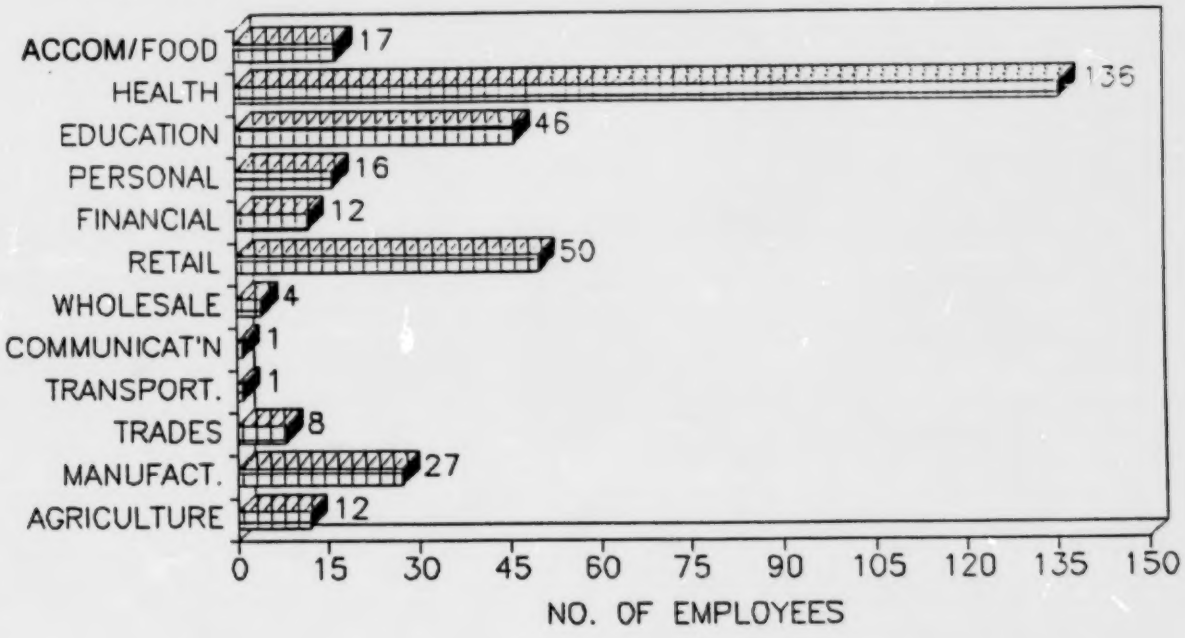
Figure 5.2
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Number of Full Time Employees by Primary Products or Services



TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The largest number of part time employees or 41.8% of the sample, are employed in the health sector (see FIGURE 5.3). A further 13.2% are employed in education, and 13.2% also work part time in the retail trade. Other important sources of part time employment are: manufacturing (7.7%), wholesale (6.2%), accommodation and food (5.2%), and business and personal services (4.3%).

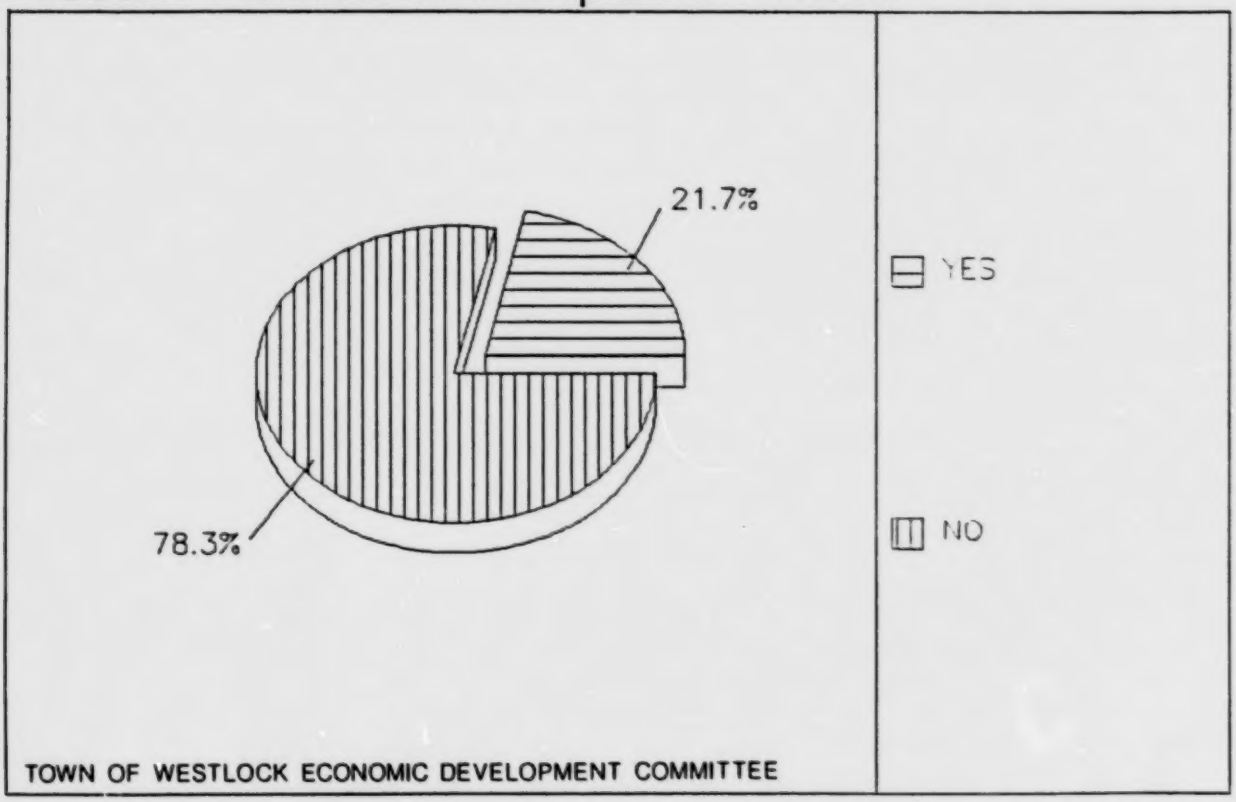
Figure 5.3
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Number of Part Time Employees by Primary Products or Services



5.3 Present Manpower Needs

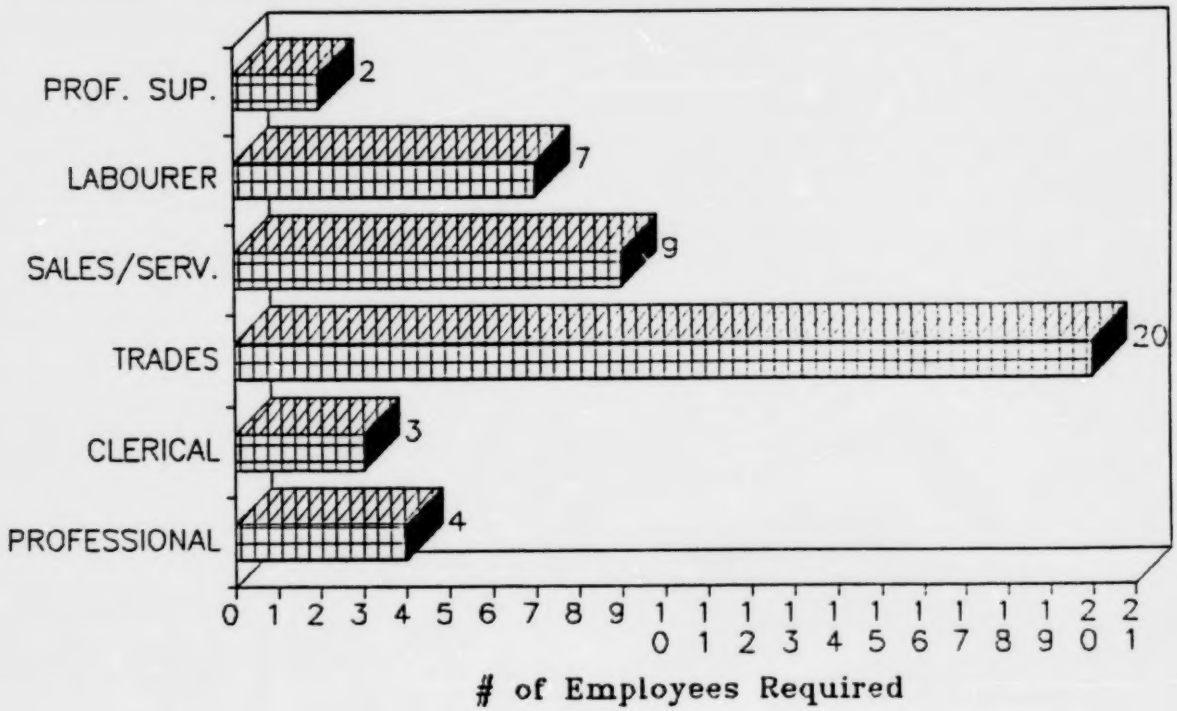
When asked to indicate whether or not they presently require additional manpower, over one-fifth (21.7%) of the employers reported that they require extra workers (see FIGURE 5.4). Over three-quarters (78.3%) of the respondents noted that they did not require any additional employees.

Figure 5.4
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Present Additional Manpower Needs



Employers were asked to identify the number of additional employees they require and the type of skills new workers will need. There is currently a need for 45 staff including: 20 tradesmen, 9 sales and service clerks, 7 labourers, 4 professionals, 3 clerks and 2 professional support personnel (see FIGURE 5.5).

Figure 5.5
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Present Requirement of Staff and Skills

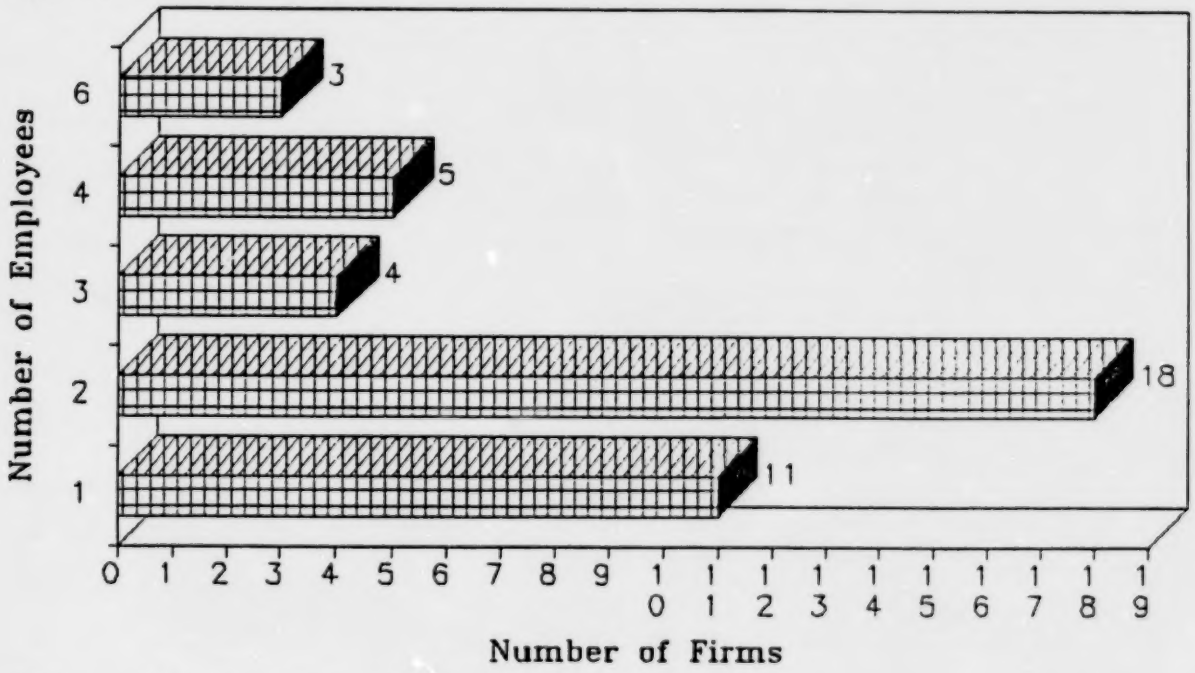


TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

5.4 Future Manpower Needs

Westlock employers project they will require an additional 97 staff over the next two years (see FIGURE 5.6). Eleven firms will require one extra employee, 18 employers will require two extra, 4 employers require three extra, 5 employers require four extra, and 3 employers require six extra workers.

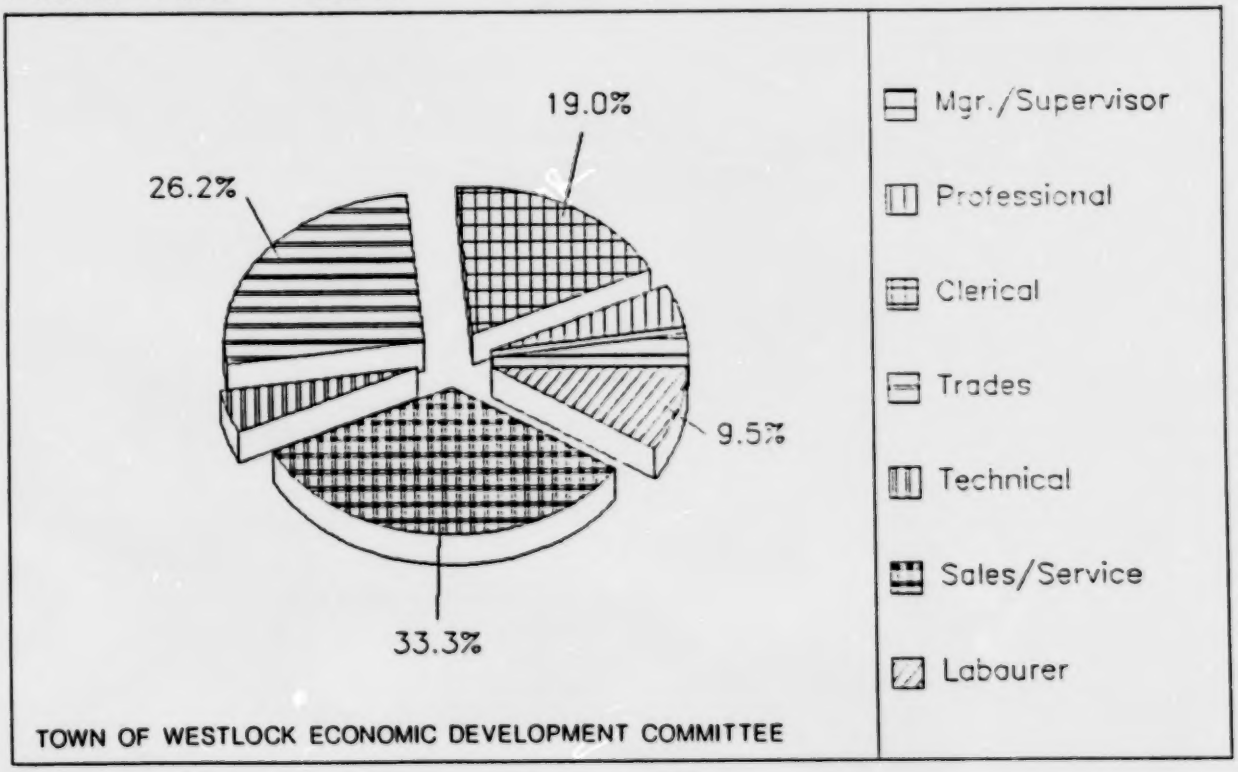
Figure 5.6
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Projected Additional Manpower Needs Over the Next Two Years



TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Employers also identified the type of employee skills they will be looking for over the next two years. The largest number of employers, or 33.3% of the respondents, said they hope to hire workers with retail sales and service skills and experience (see FIGURE 5.7). Over one-quarter (26.2%) of the employers suggested that they will require skilled tradesmen over the next two years, while 19% noted that they will need personnel with clerical skills. Less than 5% of the respondents indicated a requirement for technical support workers, and even fewer identified a need for managers or professional workers.

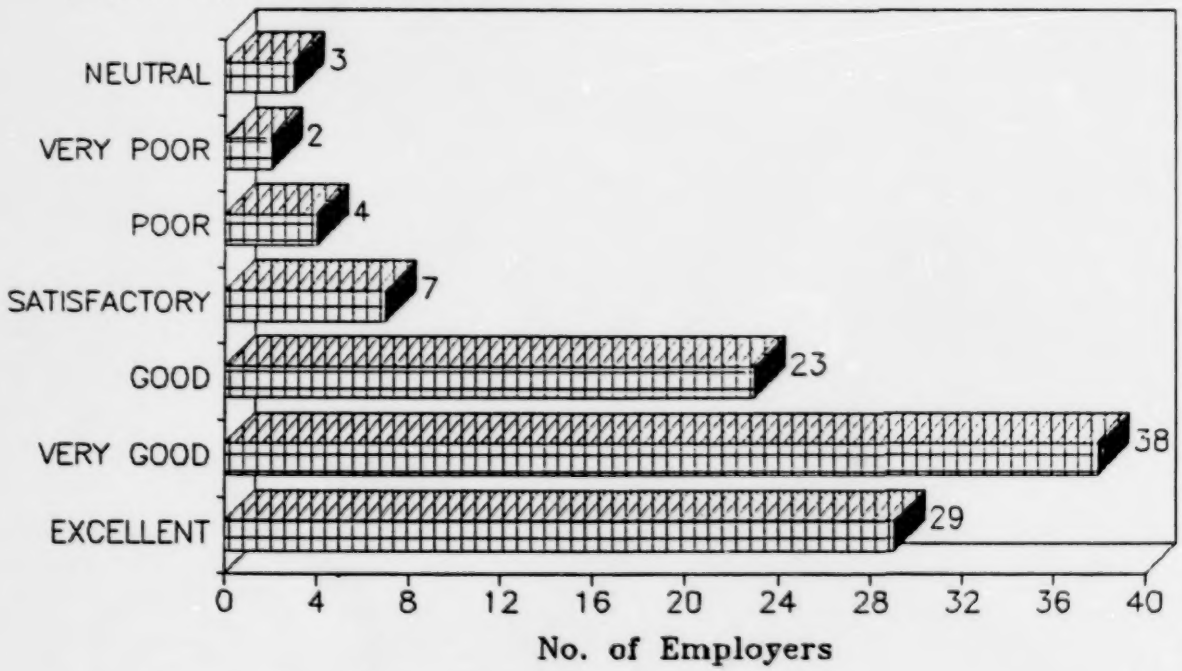
Figure 5.7
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Projected Additional Employee Skills Over the Next Two Years



6. LEVELS OF SATISFACTION

Employers were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with being located in Westlock, and also to rate their satisfaction levels with 19 selected services and attributes of the Town of Westlock. The overall satisfaction level is very high with 85% of the employers rating "being located in Westlock" as good, very good, or excellent (see FIGURE 6.1). Less than 6% rated being located in Westlock as poor or very poor overall.

Figure 6.1
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Overall Level of Satisfaction to be Located in Town of Westlock



TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The businesses and public agency employers also rated most of the 19 selected services and attributes of Westlock favourably. The majority of employers rated 13 of the services as being good or excellent. This included services and attributes such as: education (76.4%), fire protection (74.5%), health and medical care (69.8%), neighbourliness and friendliness (68.8%), provincial/federal offices and programs (67%), police protection (65.1%), housing (about 62.5%), retail (61%), water and sewer systems (55.6%), Chamber of Commerce (54.8%), visual appearance (54.7%), Council (51.9%), and water and sewer systems (51%).

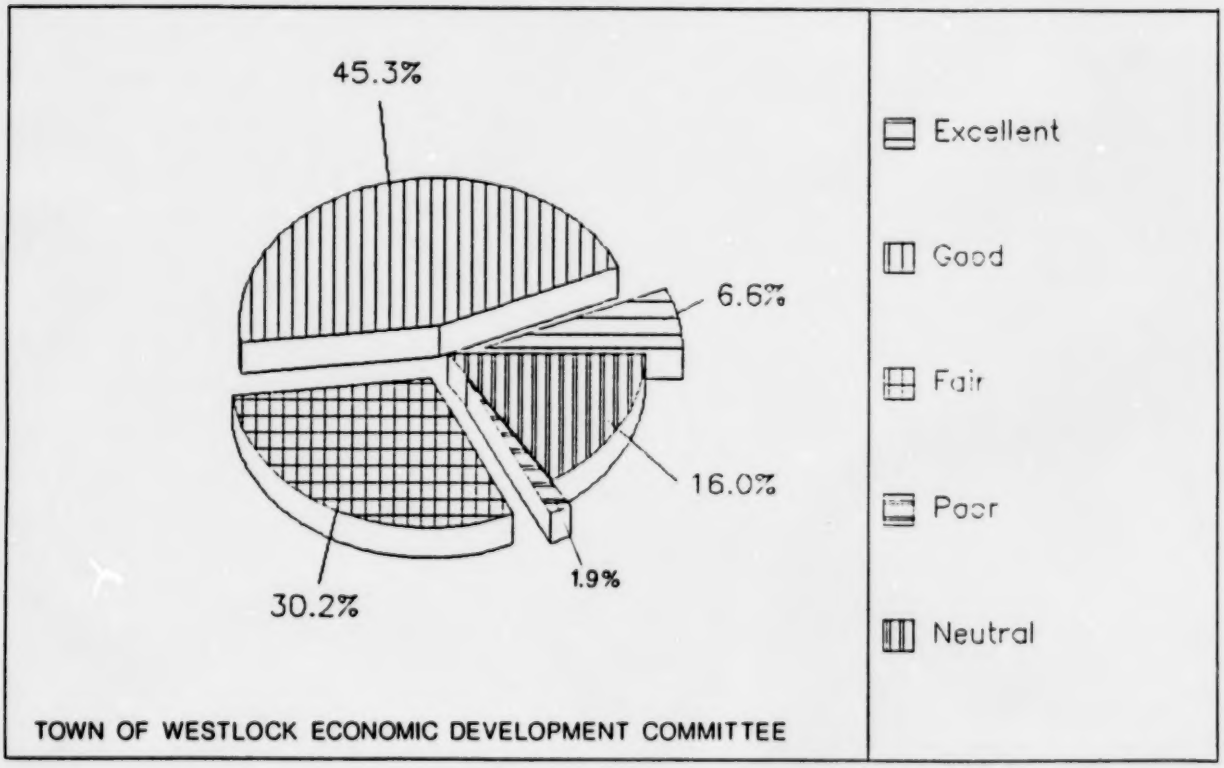
Good or excellent ratings on the following services or attributes were received by smaller percentages of employers: roads and highways (49.1%), size of Town (about 43%), cultural and recreational facilities (41.5%), cost of living (40.6%), provincial and federal offices and programs (33%), Economic Development Committee (32.7%), M.P. (23.5%), and M.L.A. (21.7%). In fairness, it should be noted that the services of the E.D.C., M.P., and M.L.A. all received very high neutral responses (39.4%, 28%, and 25.5% respectively) indicating that employers did not respond, possibly because of a lack of familiarity or knowledge of these services available, or a concern about confidentiality.

When examining the highest responses for each Westlock service or attribute some interesting percentages are revealed. In the excellent category, neighbourliness and friendliness received the highest ranking of 17.9%, while in the good category education received the highest ranking of 61.5%. Size of Town got the highest ranking in the fair category with 39.6% of the responses. The M.L.A. got the highest percentage in the poor category with 24.5% and the Economic Development Committee gained the top neutral response of 39.4%. It should be noted that the provincial/federal offices and programs question generated a variety of responses (in part due to the range of services provided by the two senior governments) which were combined into only two categories satisfied (67%) and dissatisfied (33%). It was therefore, not ranked identically with the other 18 services tested, and it also appears in both the higher and lower satisfaction groups previously discussed.

6.1 Satisfaction with Town Council

Just under half (45.3%) of the employers who responded rated the performance of Town Council as good (see FIGURE 6.2). A further 6.6% felt they are doing an excellent job, while 30.2% rated their administration as fair. Less than 5% feel Council is doing a poor job, and 16% of the employers offered no opinion.

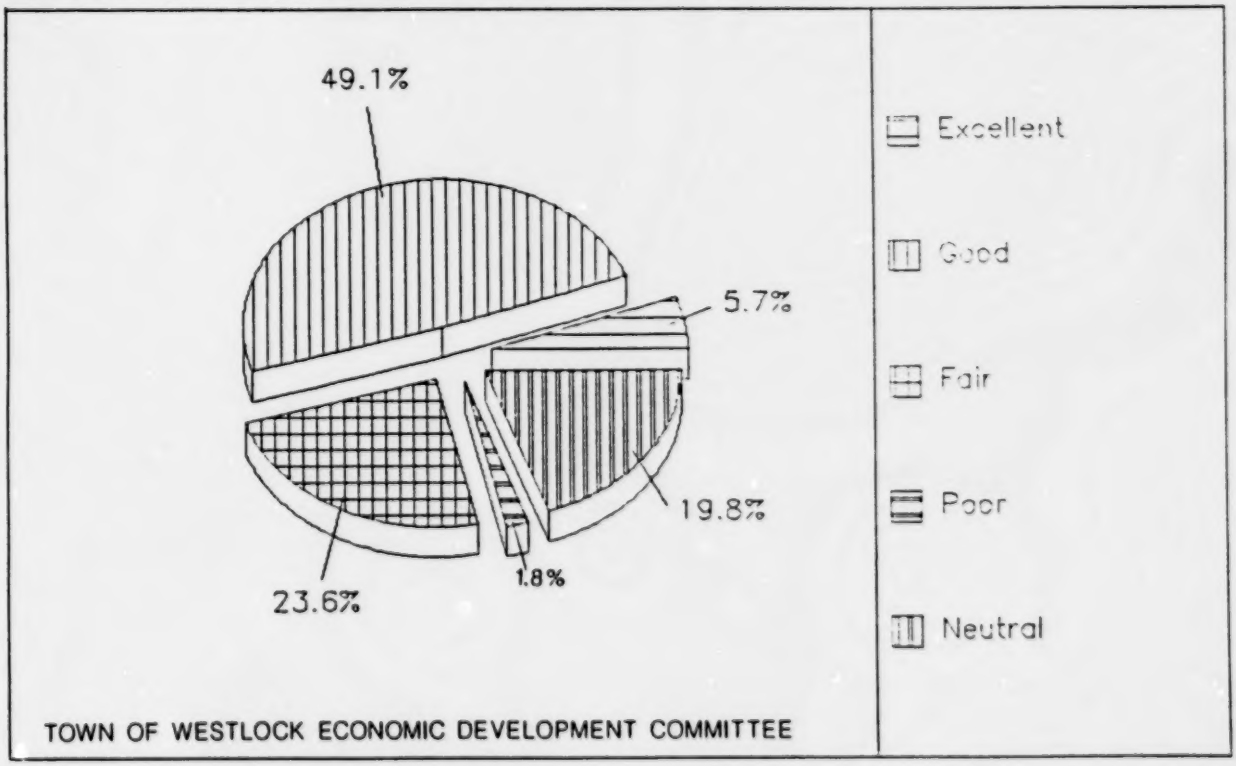
Figure 6.2
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Town Council



6.2 Satisfaction with Chamber of Commerce

Just under half (49.1%) of the respondents rated the Chamber of Commerce's performance as good (see FIGURE 6.3). Question 9 also revealed that 5.7% of employers rated the Chamber as excellent, while 23.6% feel they are doing a fair job. Less than 5% reported poor satisfaction with the Chamber, and 19.8% refrained from offering an opinion.

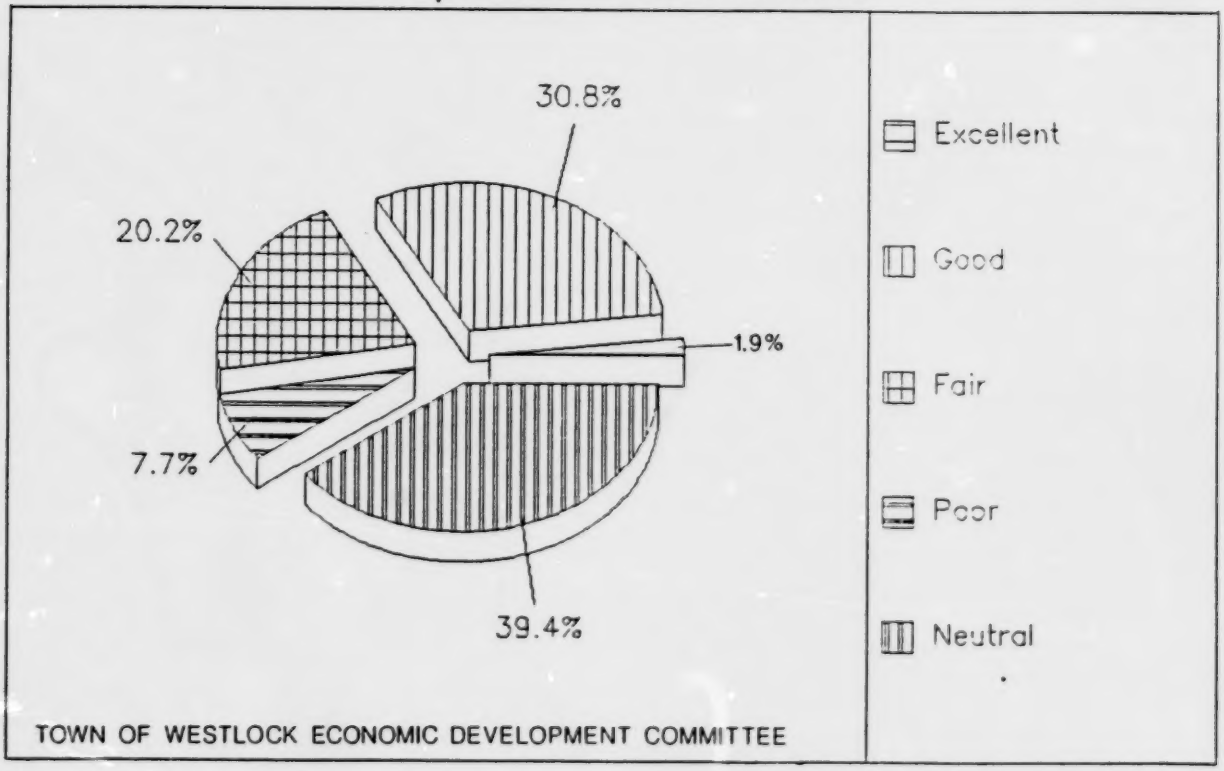
Figure 6.3
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Chamber of Commerce



6.3 Satisfaction with Westlock Economic Development Committee

Approximately one-third (30.8%) of employers rated the Economic Development Committee's performance as good, while 20.2% thought it fair, and less than 5% said it is doing an excellent job (see FIGURE 6.4). A majority of employers or (39.4%) of respondents, refrained from rating the Committee, and 7.7% felt it is doing a poor job.

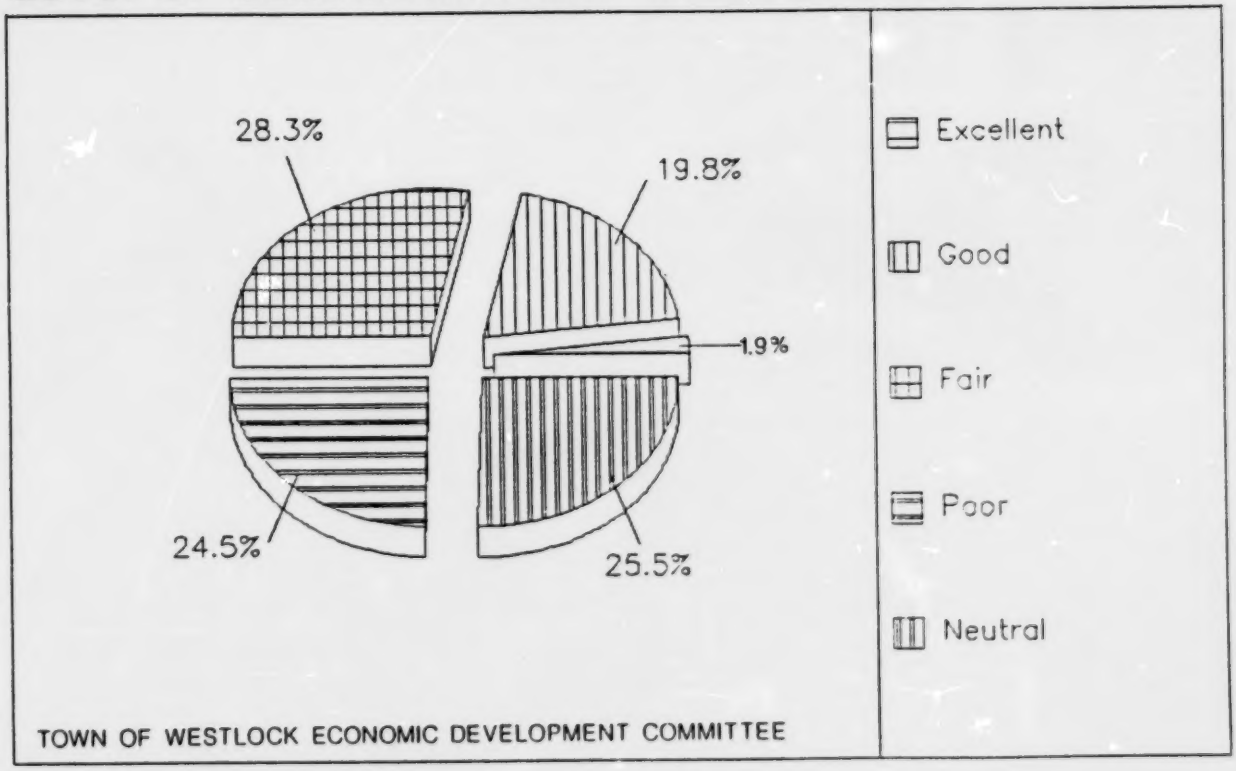
Figure 6.4
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Westlock Economic Development Committee



6.4 Satisfaction with Local M.L.A.

Over one-quarter (28.3%) of the respondents rated the local M.L.A.'s performance as fair (see FIGURE 6.5). A further 24.5% rated his work as poor, while 19.8% believe he is doing a good job. Less than 5% feel he is doing an excellent job, and 25.5% remained neutral.

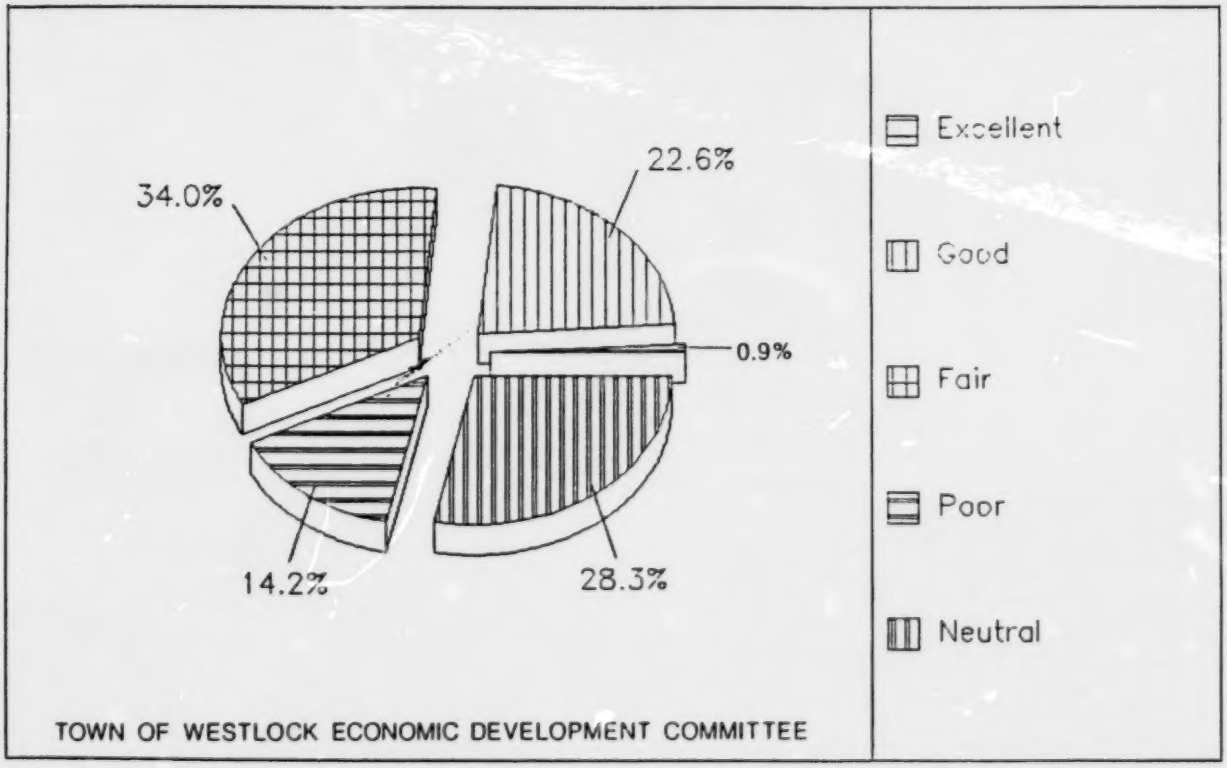
Figure 6.5
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Local M.L.A.



6.5 Satisfaction with Local M.P.

Nearly 23% of all respondents believe the local M.P. is doing a good job (see FIGURE 6.6). A further 34% indicated that his performance is fair, while 14.2% rated his work as poor. Less than 5% feel he is doing an excellent job, and 28.3% did not offer an opinion.

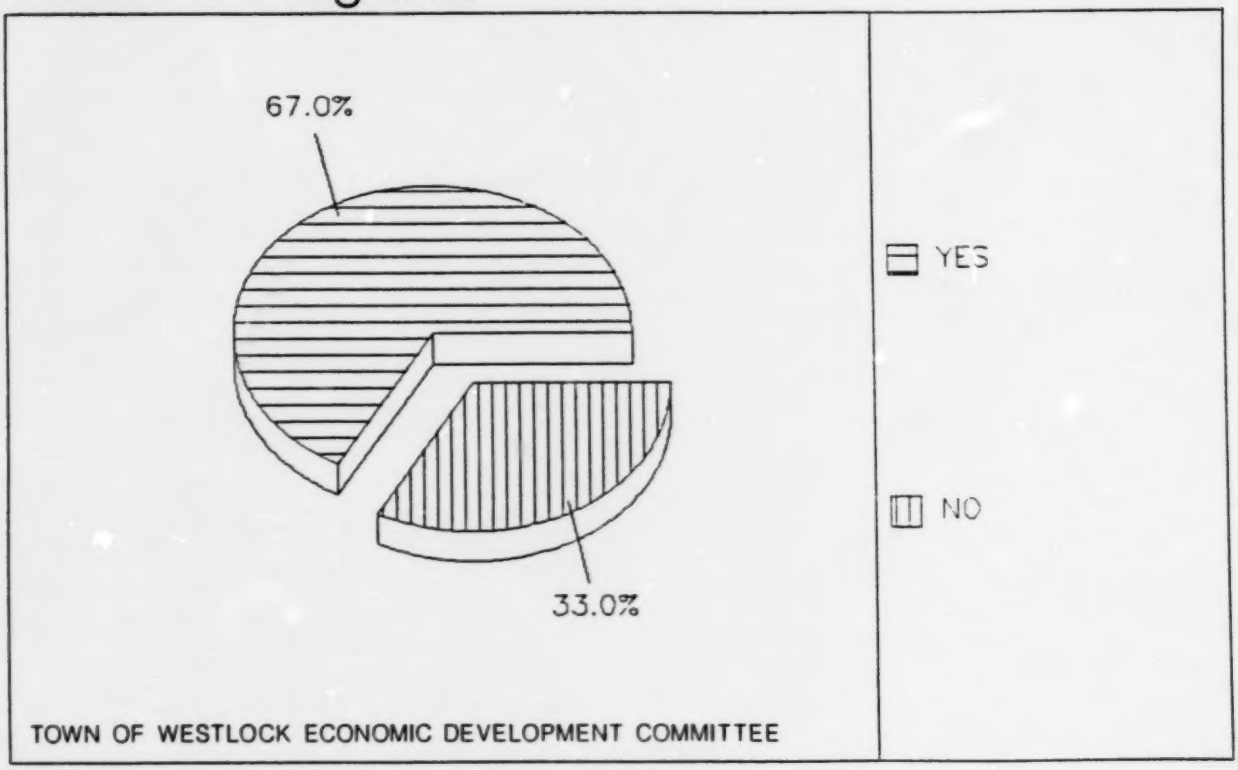
Figure 6.6
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Local Federal M.P.



6.6 Satisfaction with Provincial and Federal Offices and Programs

Two-thirds (67%) of local employers expressed satisfaction with Provincial and Federal Offices and Programs, while 33% indicated they are not satisfied (see FIGURE 6.7).

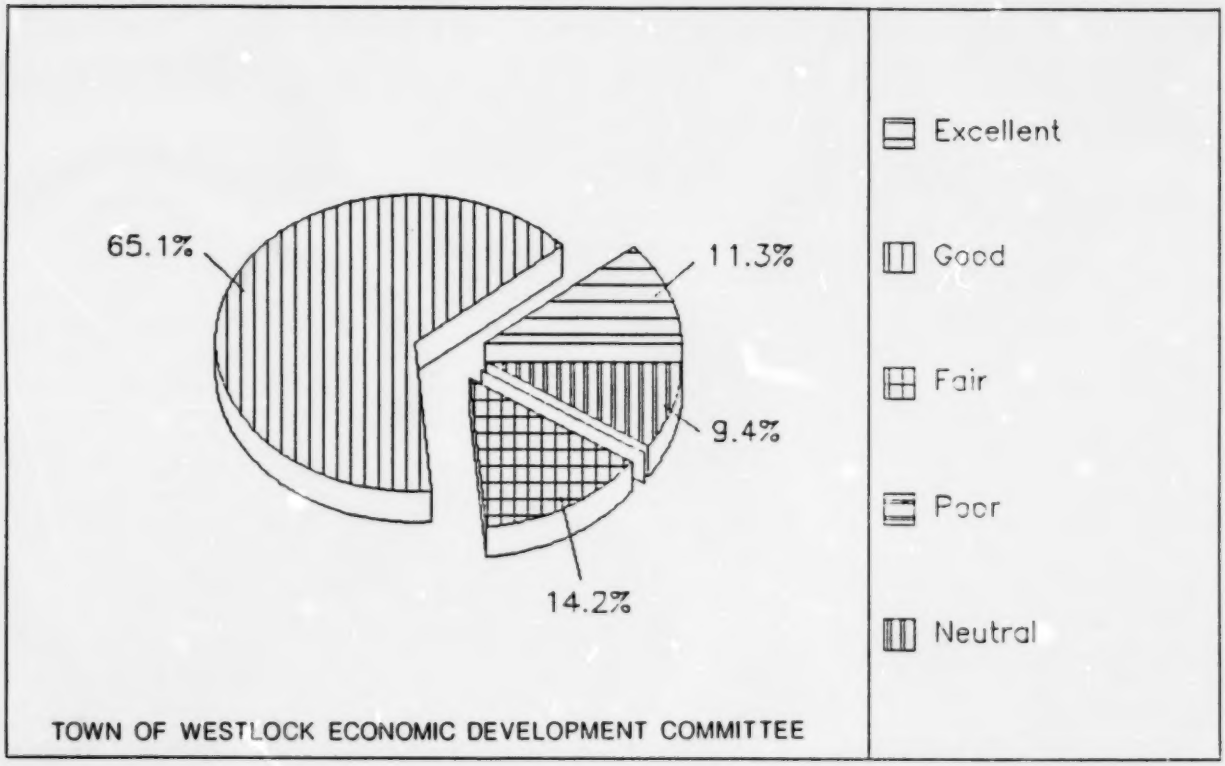
Figure 6.7
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Satisfaction with Provincial/Federal Offices & Programs



6.7 Satisfaction with Education

Over one-tenth (11.3%) of the respondents rated education in Westlock as excellent (see FIGURE 6.8). A further 65.1% rated education as good, while 14.2% rated it as fair. Less than one-tenth (9.4%) of the respondents refrained from offering an opinion.

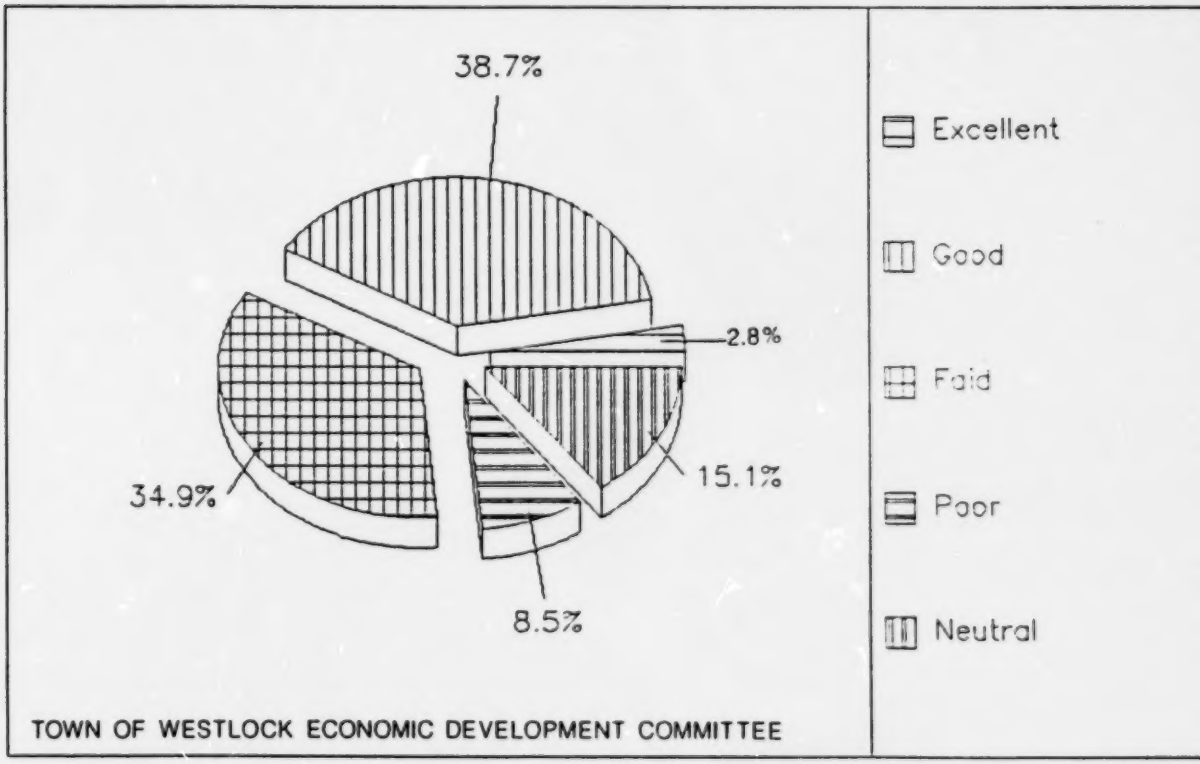
Figure 6.8
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Education



6.8 Satisfaction with Cultural and Recreational Facilities

Westlock's cultural and recreational facilities are rated as good by 38.7% of the respondents (see FIGURE 6.9). A further 34.9% rated them as fair, while 8.5% rated them as poor. Less than 5% indicated that the facilities were excellent, and 15.1% declined to offer an opinion.

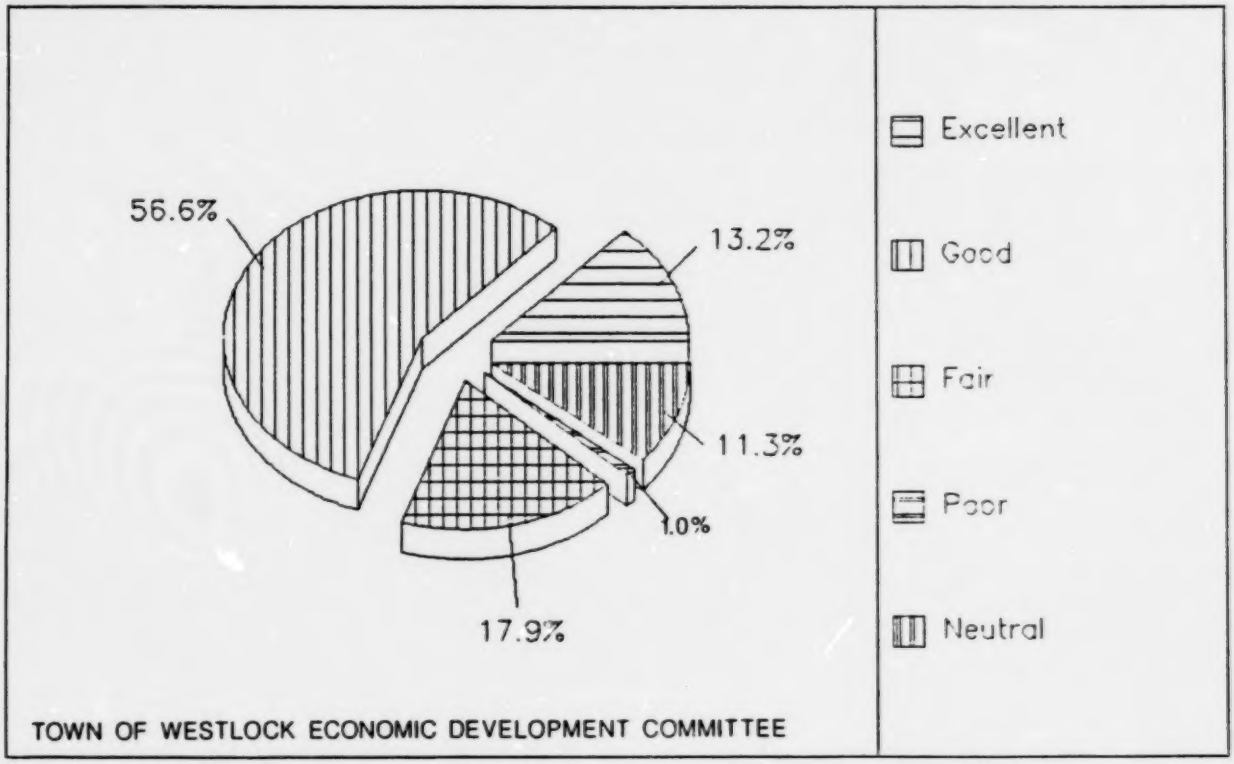
Figure 6.9
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Cultural/Recreational Facilities



6.9 Satisfaction with Health and Medical Care

Over half (56.6%) of the employers rated health and medical care as good in Westlock (see FIGURE 6.10). A further 13.2% felt health and medical care to be excellent, while 17.9% indicated that they were only fair. Less than 5% felt care was poor, and 11.3% did not express a view.

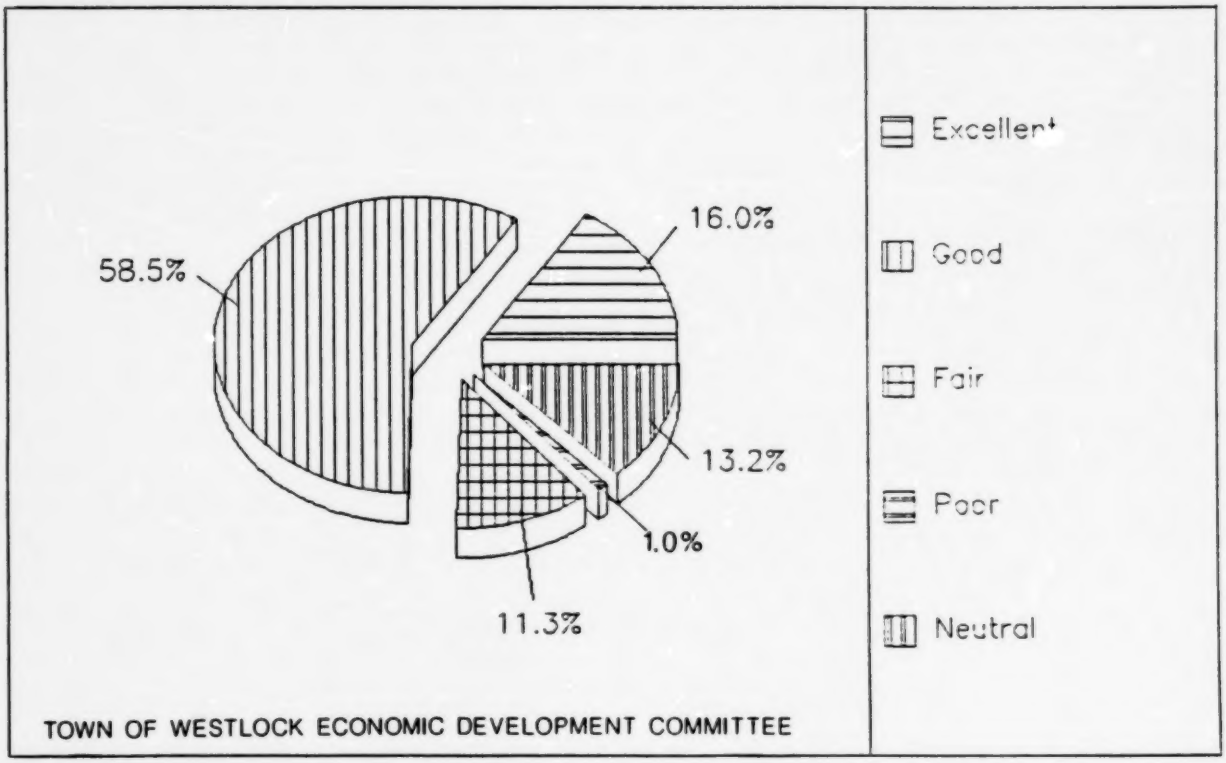
Figure 6.10
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Health & Medical Care



6.10 Satisfaction with Fire Protection

Over half (58.5%) of respondents rated Westlock's fire protection service as good (see FIGURE 6.11). Sixteen percent rated the service as excellent, while 11.3% indicated that they feel the service is fair. Less than 5% think the fire protection service is poor, and 13.2% declined to express an opinion.

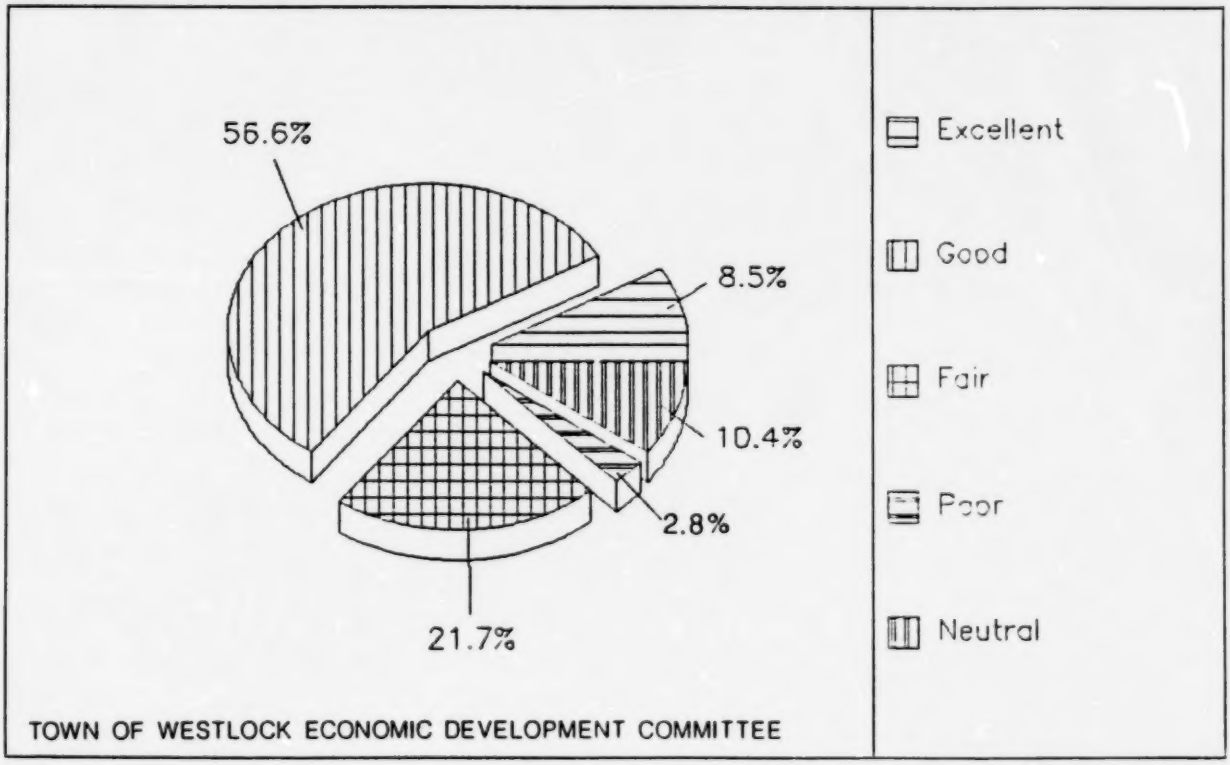
Figure 6.11
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Fire Protection



6.11 Satisfaction with Police Protection

Over half (56.6%) of the respondents rated Westlock's police protection service as good (see FIGURE 6.12). A further 21.7% rated the service as fair, while 8.5% rated it as excellent. Less than 5% felt the service was poor, and 10.4% did not comment.

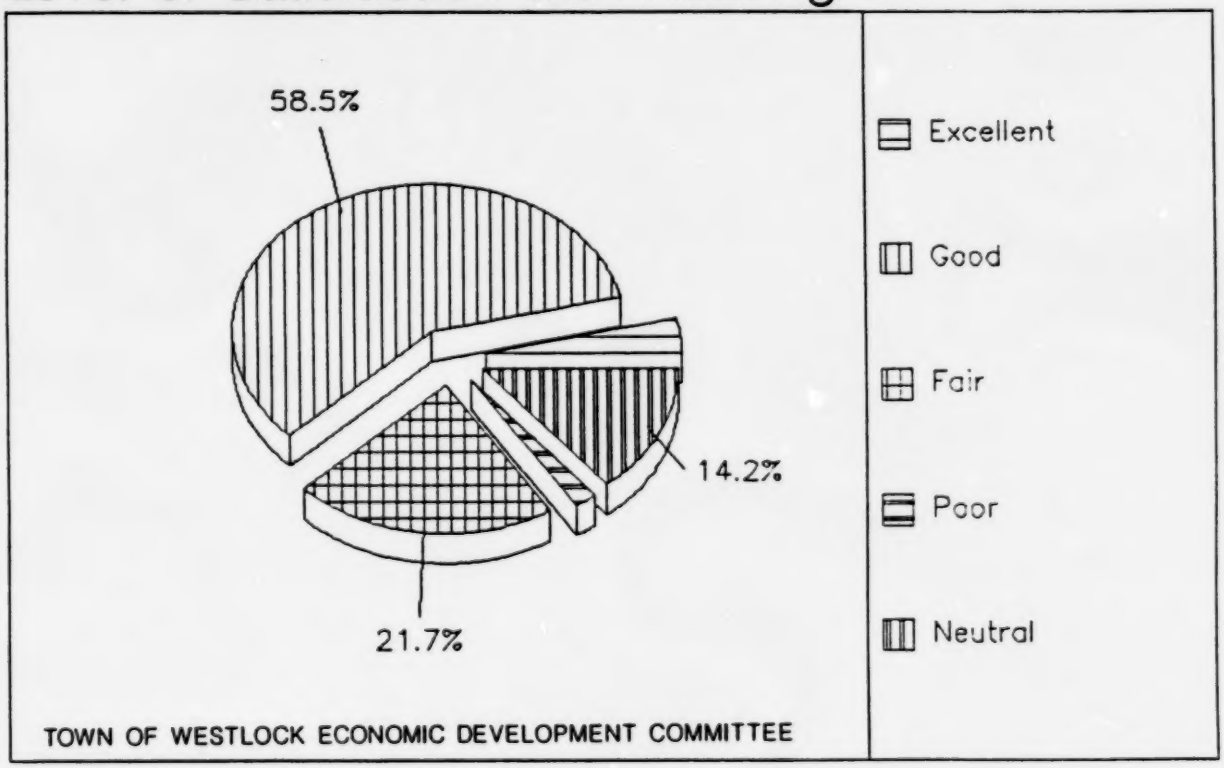
Figure 6.12
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Police Protection



6.12 Satisfaction with Housing

Over half (58.5%) of the respondents rated Westlock's housing stock as good (see FIGURE 6.13). A further 21.7% rated housing as fair, while under 5% thought it is excellent. Less than 5% felt that housing is poor in Westlock, and 14.2% did not offer an opinion.

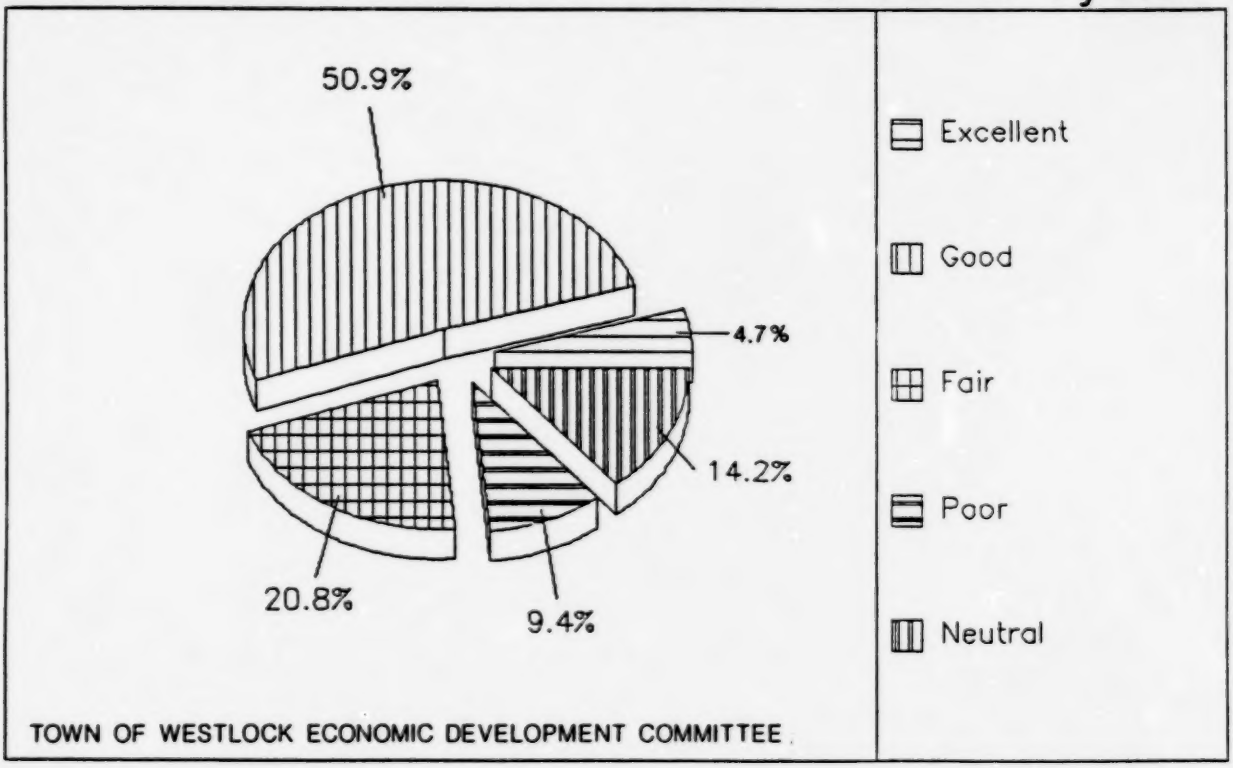
Figure 6.13
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Housing



6.13 Satisfaction with Water and Sewer Systems

Most employers (50.9%) rated Westlock's water and sewer systems as good (see FIGURE 6.14). A further 20.8% rated the systems as fair, while under 5% rated them as excellent and 9.4% rated them as poor.

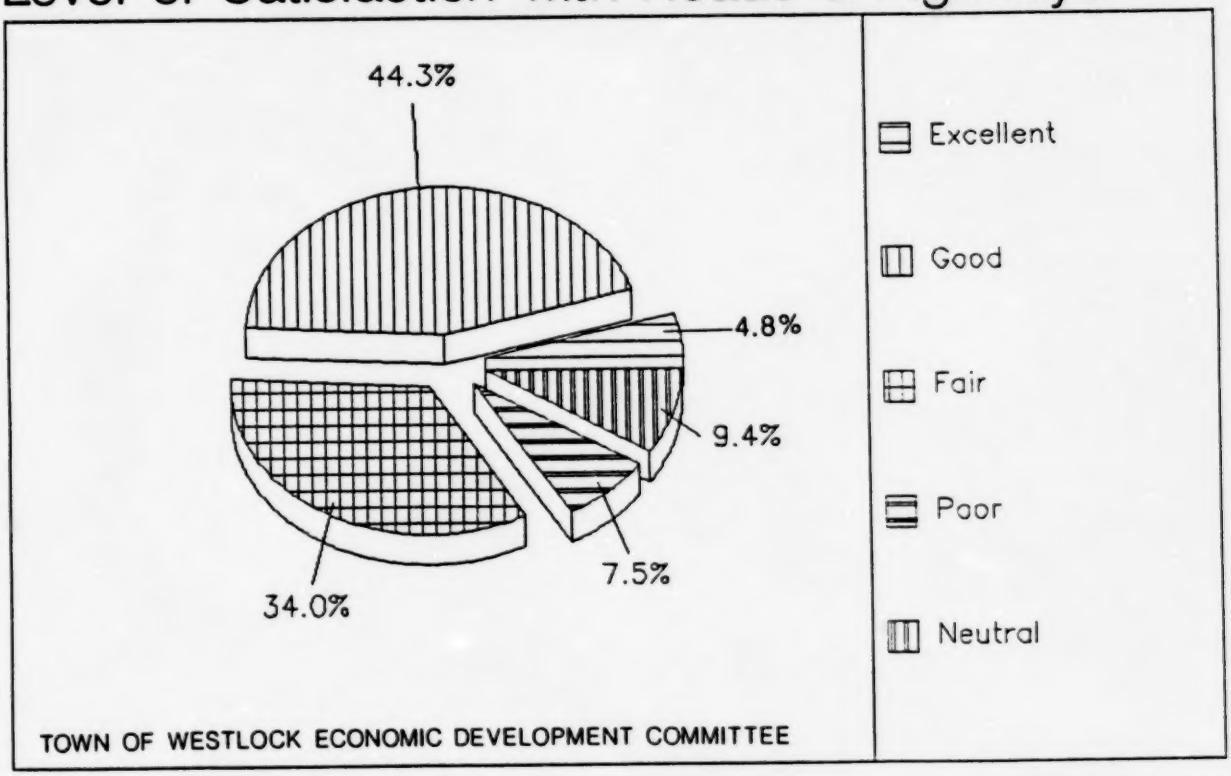
Figure 6.14
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Water & Sewer Systems



6.14 Satisfaction with Roads and Highways

Under half (44.3%) of the respondents rated Westlock's roads and highways as good (see FIGURE 6.15). Over one-third (34.0%) rated them as fair, while 7.5% rated them as poor and less than 5% rated them as excellent.

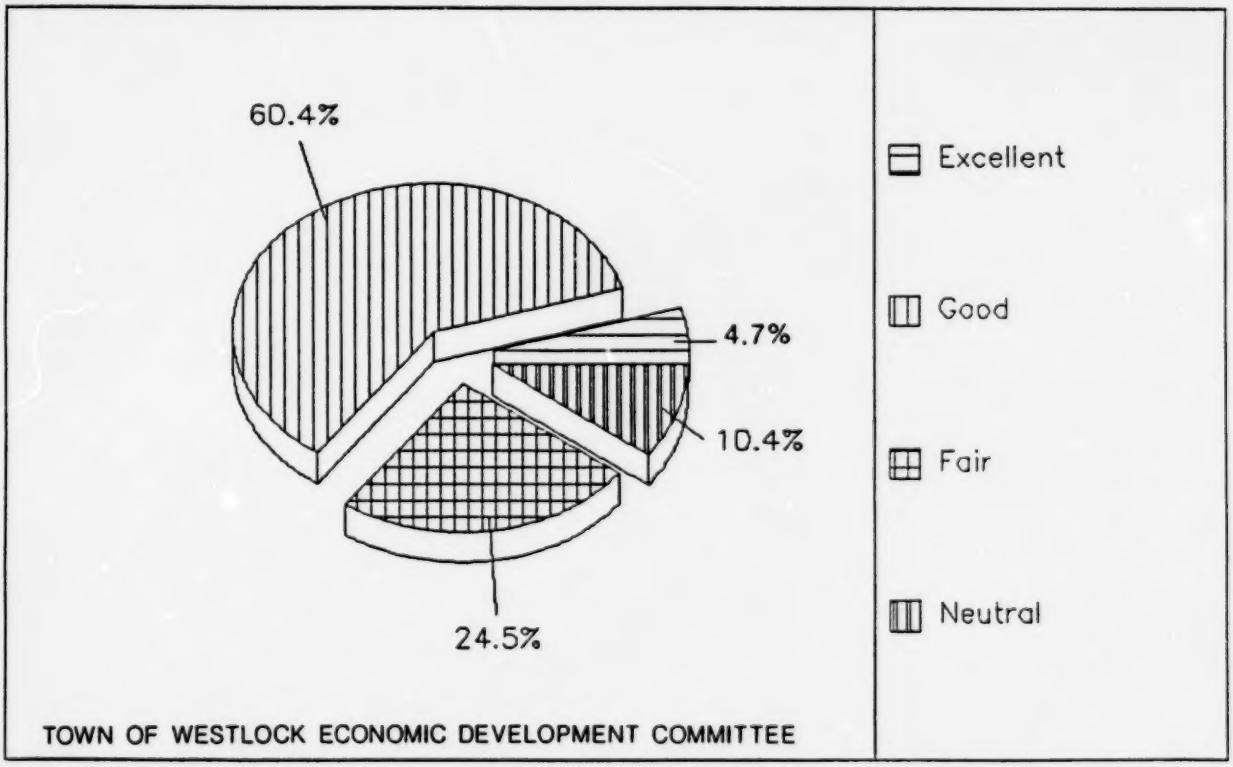
Figure 6.15
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Roads & Highways



6.15 Satisfaction with Retail Services

Just under two-thirds (60.4%) of the respondents rated Westlock's retail services as good (see FIGURE 6.16). About one-quarter (24.5%) indicated that retail services are fair, while less than 5% felt them to be excellent, and 10.4% didn't respond.

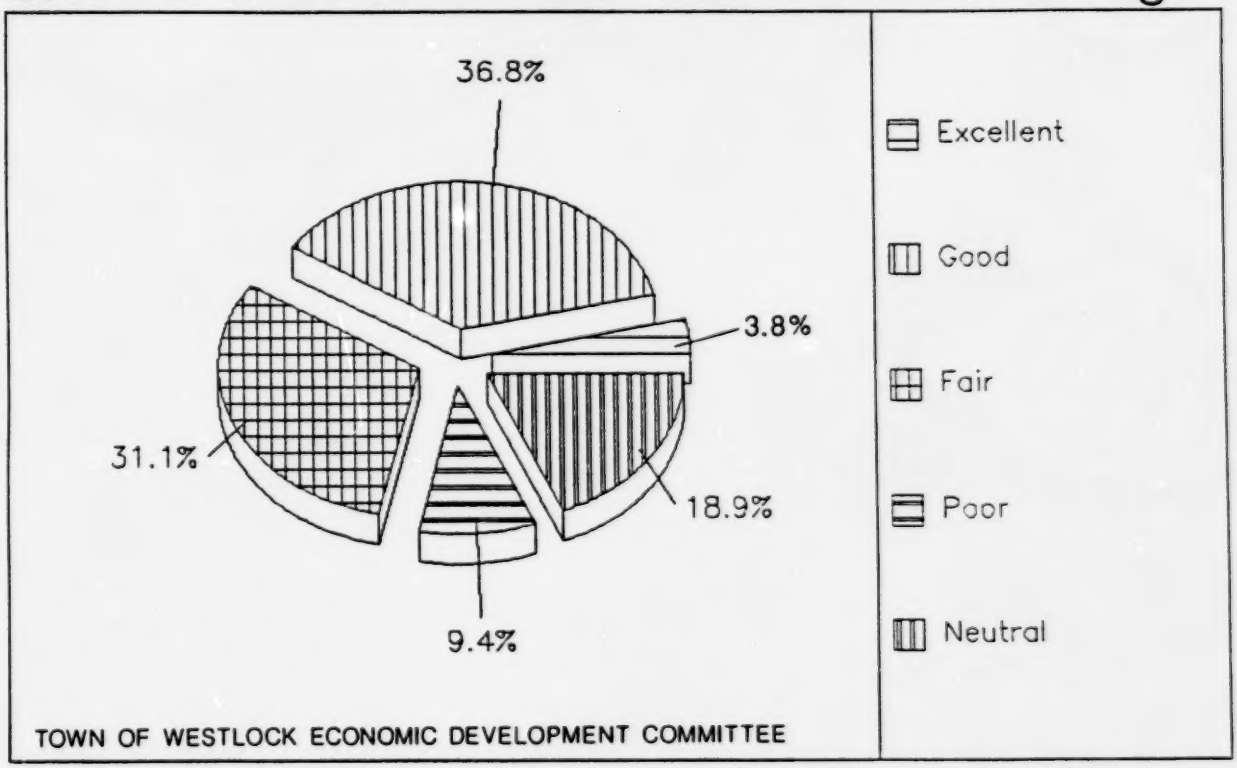
Figure 6.16
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Retail Services



6.16 Satisfaction with Local Cost of Living

Question 9 revealed that 36.8% of the employers rated the local cost of living as good (see FIGURE 6.17). Under one-third (31.1%) rated the cost of living as fair, while 9.4% rated it as poor and less than 5% rated it as excellent. Approximately one-fifth (18.9%) declined to offer an opinion.

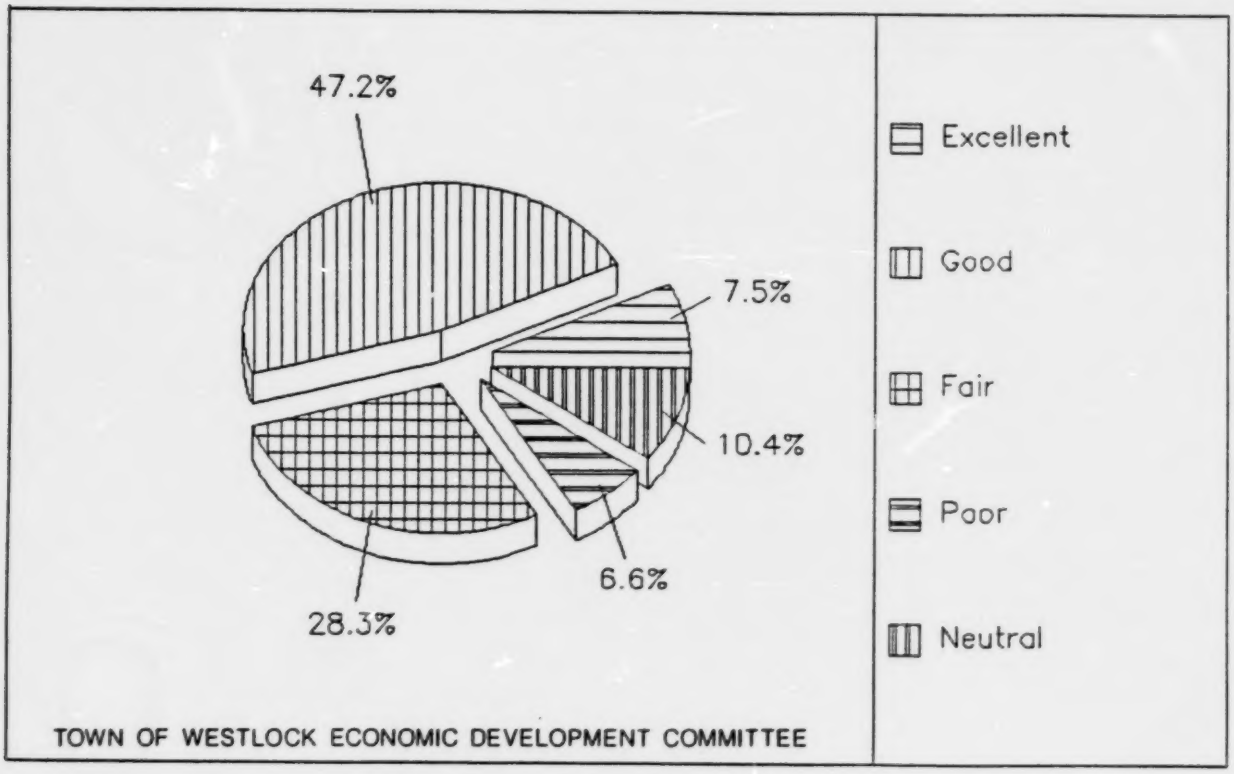
Figure 6.17
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Local Cost of Living



6.17 Satisfaction with Visual Appearance of Town

Less than half 47.2%) rated Westlock's visual appearance as good, while 7.5% rated it as excellent and 28.3% rated it as fair (see FIGURE 6.18). Only 6.6% view the Town's appearance as poor, and 10.4% did not offer an opinion.

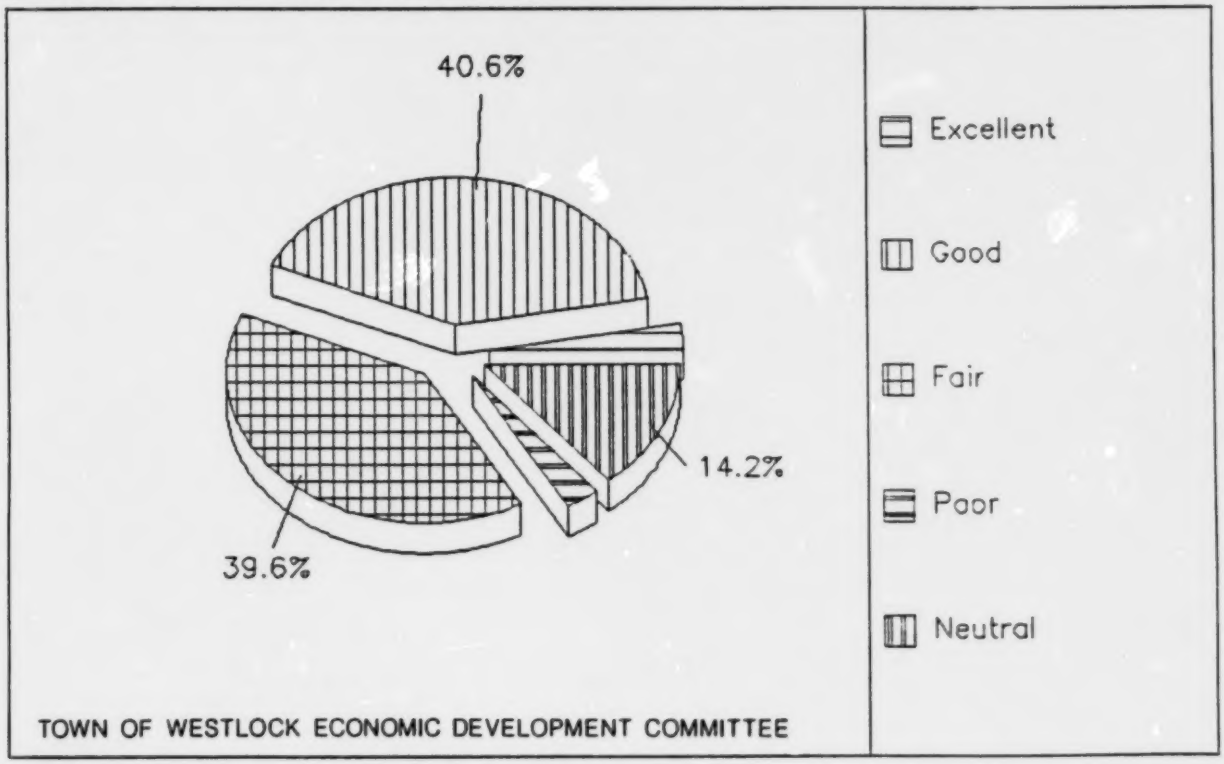
Figure 6.18
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Visual Appearance of Town



6.18 Satisfaction with Size of Town

Regarding satisfaction with size of the Town, 40.6% of the respondents rated it as good, while 39.6% rated it as fair, and 14.2% did not respond (see FIGURE 6.19).

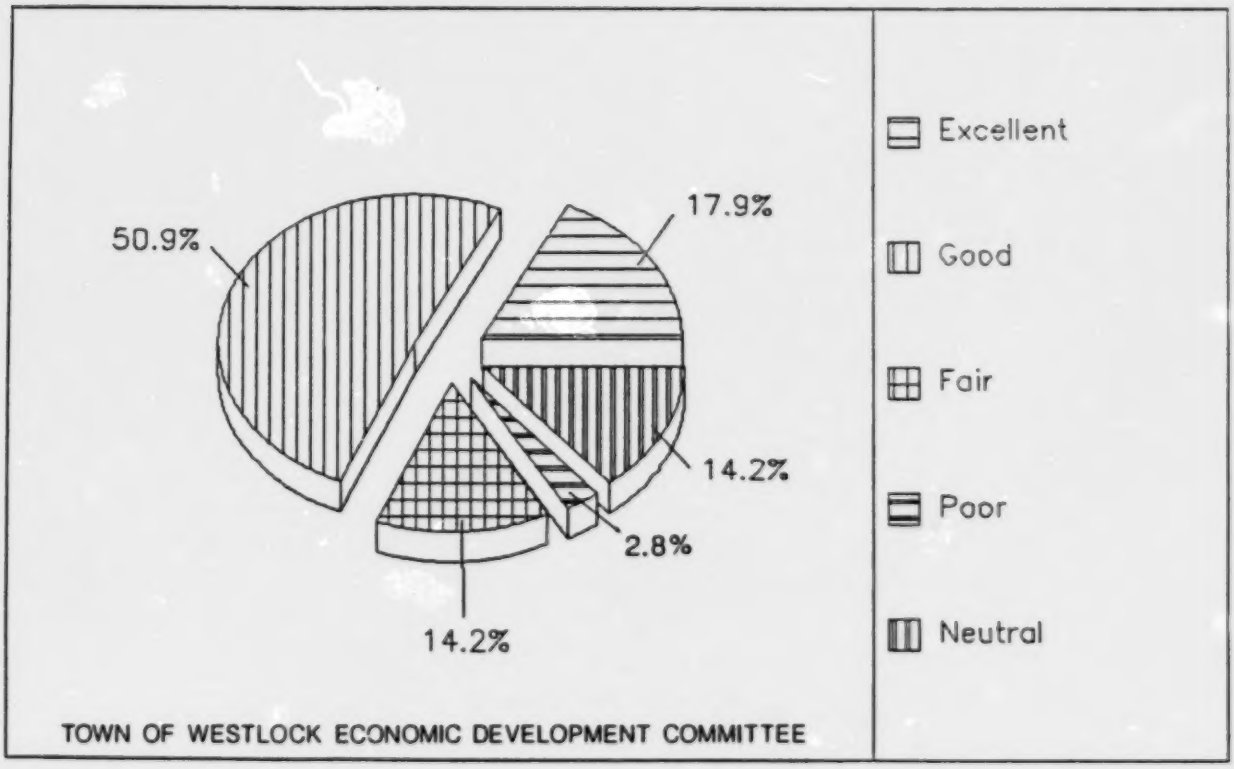
Figure 6.19
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Size of Town



6.19 Satisfaction with Neighbourliness and Friendliness

Over half (50.9%) of the respondent's rated Westlock's atmosphere of neighbourliness and friendliness as good, while 17.9% rated it as excellent and 14.2% rated it as fair (see FIGURE 6.20). Less than 5% rated the Town's neighbourliness as poor, and 14.2% declined to offer an opinion.

Figure 6.20
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Level of Satisfaction with Neighbourliness/ Friendliness



7. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF OPERATING IN WESTLOCK

When requested to identify the three major advantages and disadvantages to operating a business or organization in Westlock, employers provided a wide range of comments. The first seven advantages and disadvantages in each list were the most commonly mentioned. It is also interesting to note that what is a disadvantage to one employer is frequently mentioned as an advantage to another, e.g. "size of Westlock", and "proximity to Edmonton".

7.1 Advantages

The advantages or strengths of operating a business or organization in Westlock are identified as follows by the employers:

-central to large agricultural area
-size of Town
-proximity to Edmonton
-good farming area
-friendly community
-stable local economy
-easier to know customers in a small Town

-Town has enough services to draw shoppers
-less competition
-good transportation system
-low overhead
-Town is progressive
-reasonable labour rates
-community awareness of local businesses
-major highways meet at Westlock
-good service = people shopping locally
-variety of banking institutions
-reasonable property taxes
-well settled prosperous local community
-good place to live and raise a family
-Town in good financial order
-excellent machinery and livestock sales
-reasonable cost of living
-distances to services are short
-area has growth potential/room to expand
-good medical services

7.2 Disadvantages

The disadvantages of operating in Westlock as listed by employers include:

-proximity to Edmonton
-lack of major industry in Edmonton
-high percentage of seniors in Town
-lack of concentrated business section
-limited population
-dependency upon agriculture
-long distance charges/shipping charges

-advertising costs
-water
-lack of determined young workers
-rental rates too high
-lack of buildings to rent on highways
-lack of qualified workers
-poor mail service
-Town planning commission
-shortage of quality office space
-lack of recreational facilities
-land prices
-poor economy
-eyesores downtown detract from Westlock's appearance
-street address system
-shortage of parking
-small Town politics
-no encouragement to try Westlock
-very little government spending in Town
-high cost of rent in prime retail areas

8. BUSINESS AND PUBLIC AGENCY NEEDS

Two of the questions in the survey addressed prerequisites for expansion or diversification, and employer needs. Obviously expansion of sales receipts for business and larger budgets for public sector employers would stimulate expansion and creation of new jobs. More specifically however, the survey looked at the "critical factors" which would stimulate business/organizational expansion or diversification over the next two years, and which programs could benefit employers in this process.

8.1 Critical Factors for Expansion or Diversification

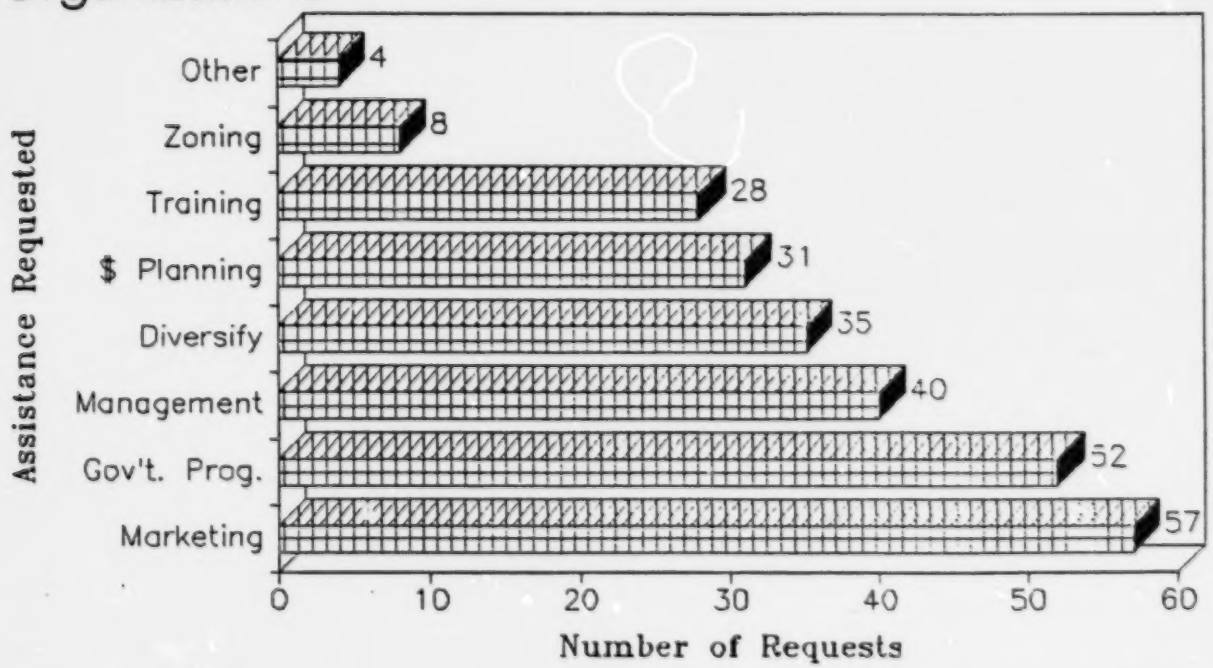
Since most new jobs and new businesses are created by existing businesses and agencies expanding or diversifying (rather than new businesses coming in from the outside), the survey attempted to identify what critical factors encourage local employers to expand or diversify. Although some responses relate to provincial, or even international factors, largely outside the control of Westlock employers, several other factors are "actionable" by local businesses and agencies. The critical factors identified include:

-increase in population of trade area
-change in government fiscal policy
-upturn in provincial economy
-increased local construction
-farm income must increase
-increase in skilled tradesmen and qualified staff
-sales will have to increase
-boom in oil industry
-more work!!
-need more industry in Westlock
-increases in consumer spending
-"nuke" Edmonton!

8.2 Assistance Programs

Employers were asked to identify specific programs which would benefit them in their operations. Although employers responding to this question each mentioned several programs needed, the results are quite useful to government and private sector consultants providing these services. Nearly 54% (57 employers) requested marketing assistance and 49% (52 employees) wished more information on government programs (see FIGURE 8.1). Other program areas which generated significant requests include: management advice 38% (40 responses); expansion/diversification planning assistance 33% (35 responses); financial planning assistance 29% (31 responses); and staff training 26% (28 responses). These results demonstrate a strong need and demand for training in the areas of management, growth guidance and marketing in Westlock.

Figure 8.1
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Requested Programs To Benefit Business or Organizations



TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

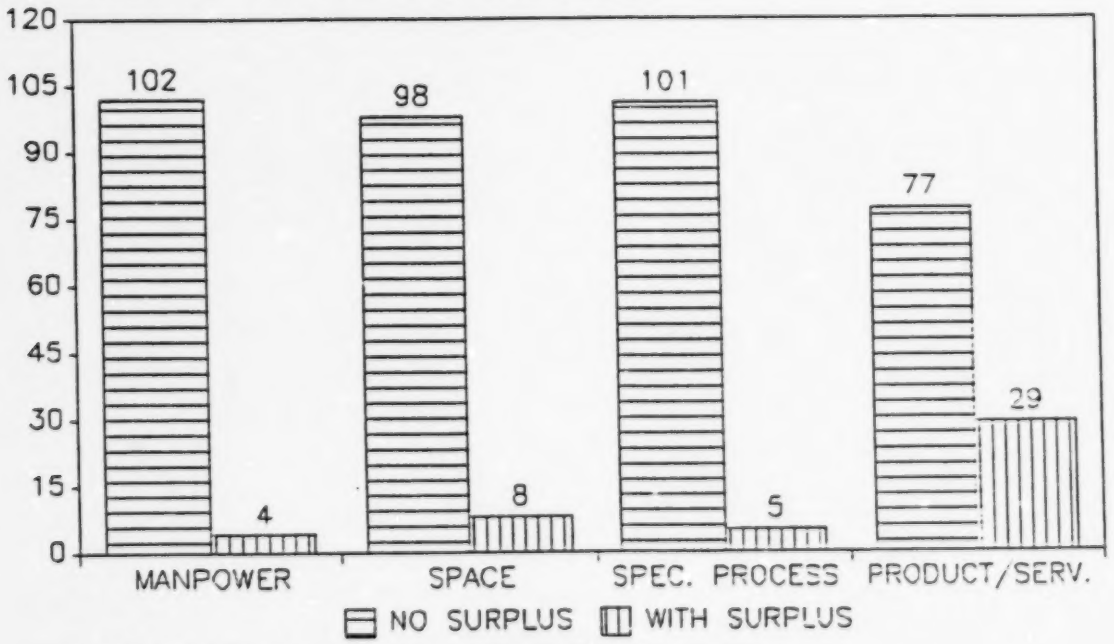
9. POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

One of the purposes of the survey was to identify potential business or public sector opportunities which could increase sales, create new businesses, or expand or diversify existing businesses and community services. In this regard, employers provided input on surplus capacities, products/services obtained outside Westlock, viable businesses and service opportunities, and tourism ideas.

9.1 Surplus Capacities

This question sought information on how many employers had surplus capacities in manpower, space, specific processes and products/services. The results are shown on FIGURE 9.1. Four employers indicated that they had surplus manpower, while 102 said they did not. Five employers have surplus capacity in specific processes, eight have surplus space and twenty-nine have surplus products or services.

Figure 9.1
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Surplus Capacity in Manpower, Space, Specific Process & Products/Services



TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The only category in which employers have significant surpluses is products and services. Approximately 27% of employers have surplus capacity here. As the questionnaire responses are considered to be confidential, those businesses and agencies wishing assistance with "matching up" their surplus products/services with potential clients should contact the Town's Economic Development Officer and the Alberta Economic Development and Trade Business Development Representative.

9.2 Products and Services Purchased Outside Westlock

Opportunities may existing in improving the retention of retail and service trade dollars. The following is a list of products and services that are being purchased outside Westlock due to lack of local availability or price:

-office supplies/stationery
-vehicles
-building supplies
-office computers
-food
-printing products
-photo supplies and cameras
-greenhouse supplies
-insurance
-refrigeration maintenance
-furniture/office equipment
-feed and cattle equipment
-newspaper supplies
-janitorial products
-automotive supplies

9.3 Suggested Business and Community Service Opportunities

Employers were asked to identify viable business opportunities and community programs or facilities which would strengthen the Westlock business community and create new jobs. The following is a list of the suggestions provided:

-recreation complex/covered pool
-slaughter house/packing plant
-alfalfa plant
-drive-through car wash
-agriculture and trade school/vocational school
-bio-chemical plant
-light manufacturing
-resident jeweller and watch repair
-agricultural college/technical college
-small scale garbage recycling project
-restaurants that deliver food
-Community Futures Program
-Management Assistance Program/Financing Assistance Program
-office machine repair
-shoe store
-another Employment Opportunity Program worker

9.4 Tourism Development

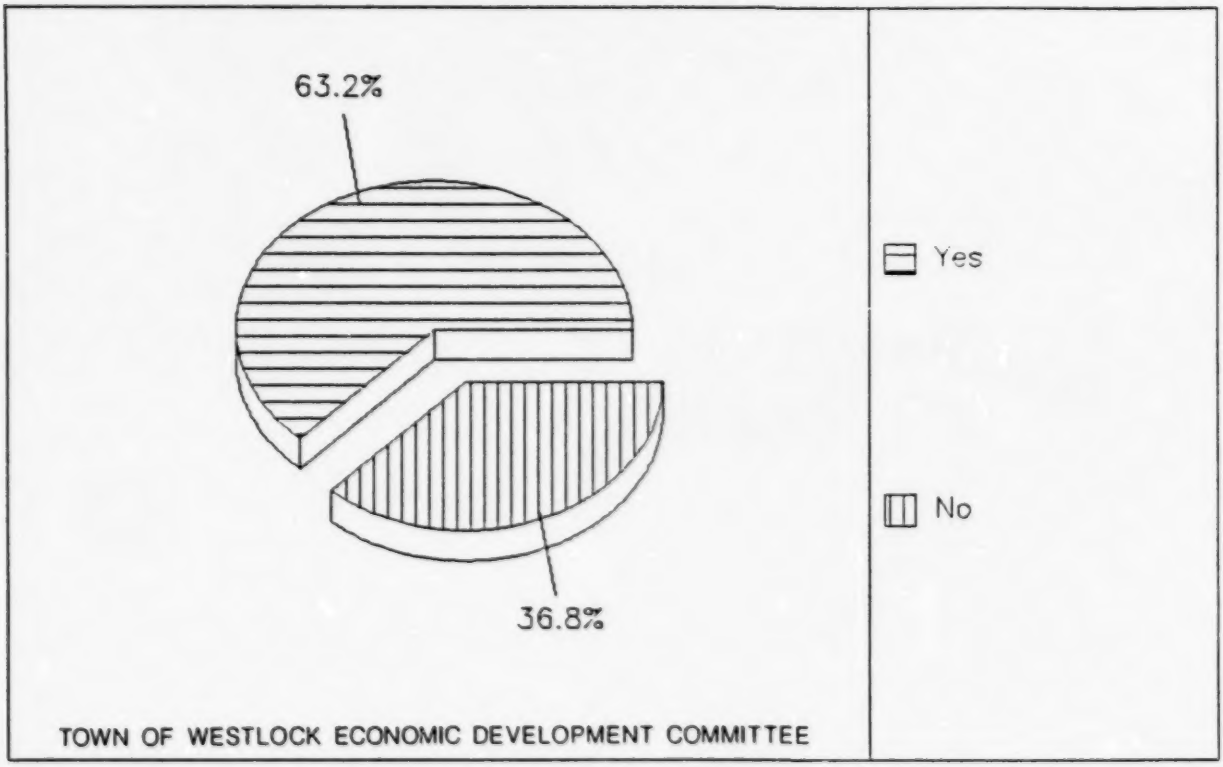
Employers were asked to offer ideas on how to get tourists to "stop, shop, and stay" in Westlock. The following suggestions were received:

-advertise the Town in federal and provincial publications
-make Town look more attractive, especially along the highway
-create a reason to stay or stop (i.e. the Easter Egg in Vegreville)
-promote local recreational areas and sponsor weekend jamborees
-special sports events
-camping area for the Town
-new signs indicating directions to downtown
-build a museum and park
-host business conventions
-host an annual event
-improved tourist booth
-upgrade Mountie Park campground
-covered pool
-some kind of historical theme park like Fort Edmonton
-miniature golf course
-more summertime events like the promenade
-waterslide
-"smile and be polite"
-run summer competitions to recognize businesses and employees who do an exceptional job of promoting tourism

9.5 Employers Available for Community Programs and Activities

When asked if they are available to assist with programs and activities aimed at improving the Westlock business community, nearly two-thirds (63.2%) of the employers responded in the affirmative (see FIGURE 9.2). This indicates there is a broad base of support for business initiatives in the community and a large group of business people and public sector employers who could be of assistance to the Economic Development Committee and the Chamber of Commerce in the future development of Westlock.

Figure 9.2
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Employers Available for Community Programs & Activities



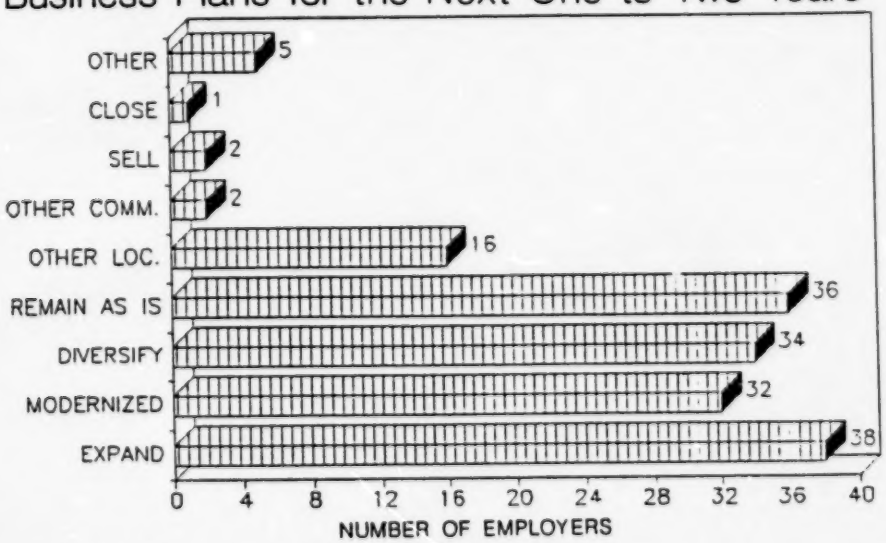
10. FUTURE PLANS AND PROSPECTS

This Chapter examines the plans employers have for their operations over the short-term and how they rate their long-term prospects in Westlock.

10.1 Business Plans for the Next One to Two Years

Employers were asked to express their plans for their businesses or organizations over the next one to two years. Thirty-six percent (38 employers) indicated that they planned to expand their businesses, while 32% (34 employers) responded that they expected to diversify (see FIGURE 10.1). Thirty percent (32 employers) plan to renovate, 34% (36 employers) proposed to remain the same, and 15% (16 employers) anticipate moving to new locations. Two firms expect to relocate their firms in other communities, two others intend to sell their business and one employer plans to close his business. Five employers have other plans including opening branch offices in other areas and offering franchises. Note that the total responses exceed 106 employers and 100% indicating that some employers' plans include more than one option. The results are very positive in that significant percentages of employers plan to expand, renovate or diversify, while very few contemplate moving to other communities, selling or closing.

Figure 10.1
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
Business Plans for the Next One to Two Years

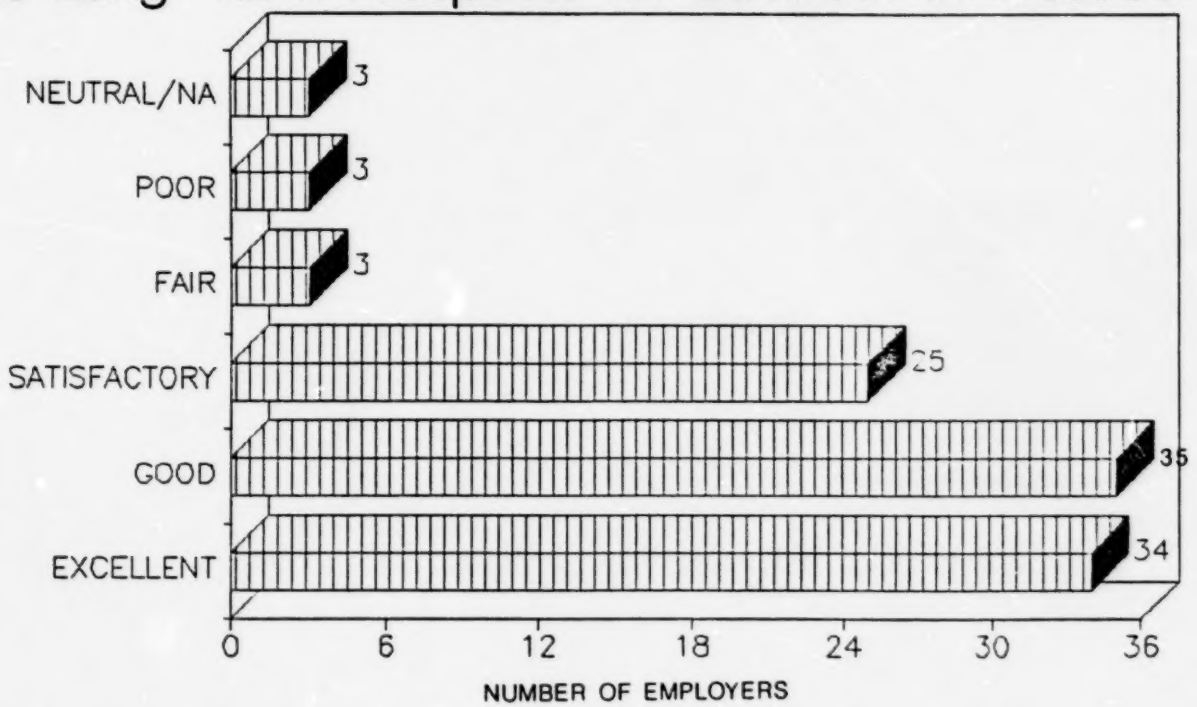


TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

10.2 Long-Term Prospects

Of the 103 responses to the question of long-term prospects for business in Westlock, 67% (69 responses) rated the prospects as good or excellent (see FIGURE 10.2). Twenty-four precent (25 employers) felt their prospects satisfactory, while only about 3% (3 employers) considered their prospects to be fair or to be poor.

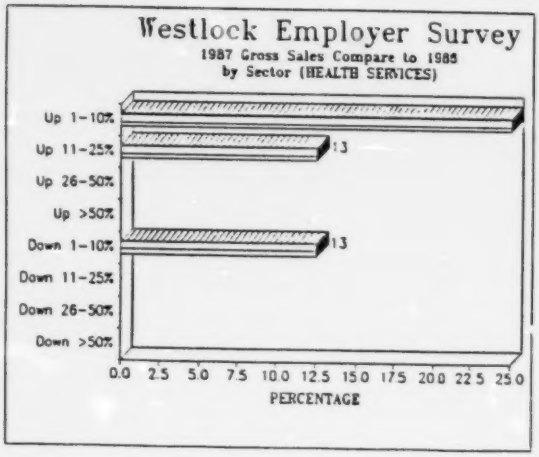
Figure 10.2
WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY 1988
The Long-Term Prospects for Business in Westlock

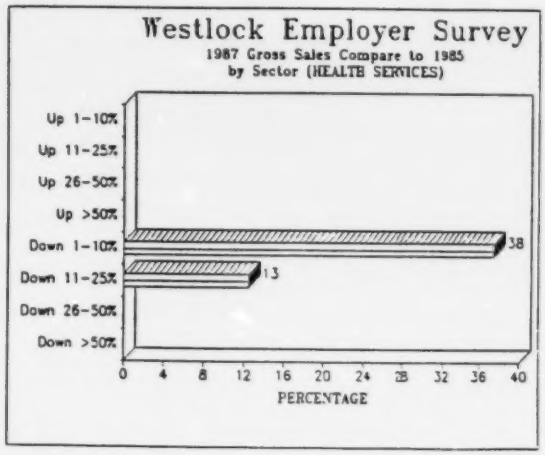


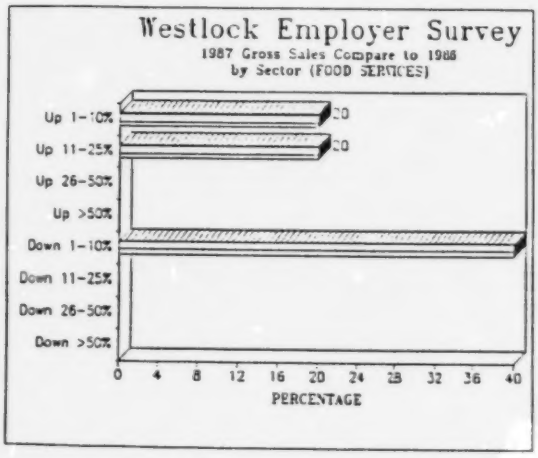
TOWN OF WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

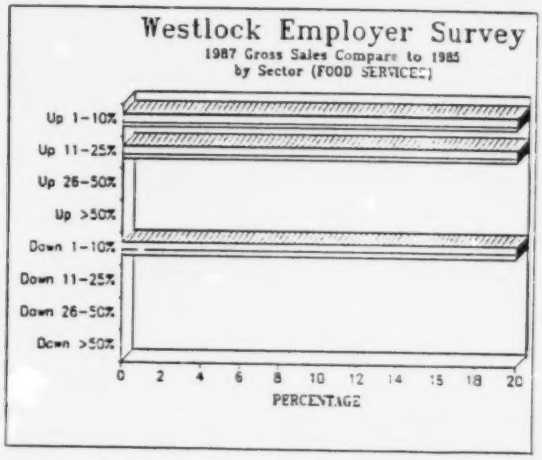
APPENDIX 1

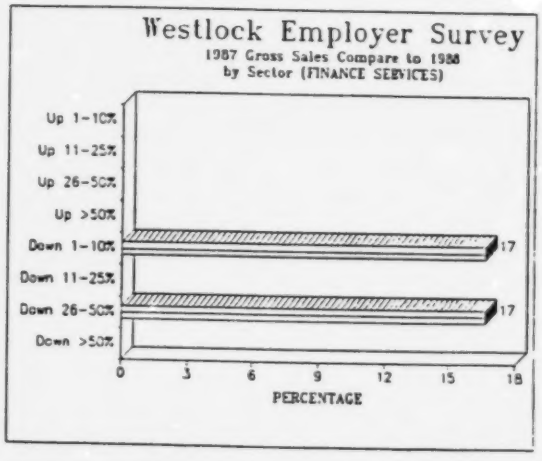
1987 GROSS SALES COMPARED WITH 1986 AND 1985 BY SECTOR

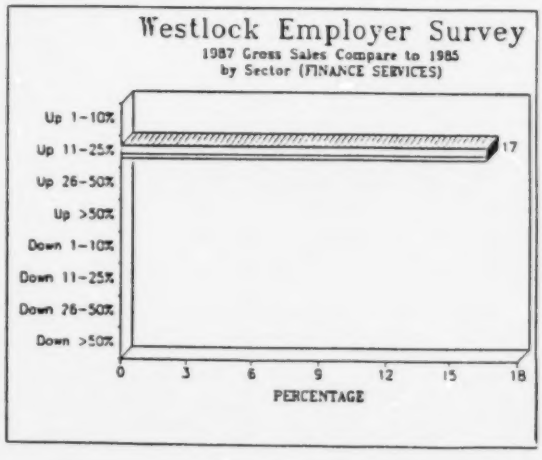

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (HEALTH SERVICES)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
13
13
0.0 2.5 5.0 7.5 10.0 12.5 15.0 17.5 20.0 22.5 25.0
PERCENTAGE

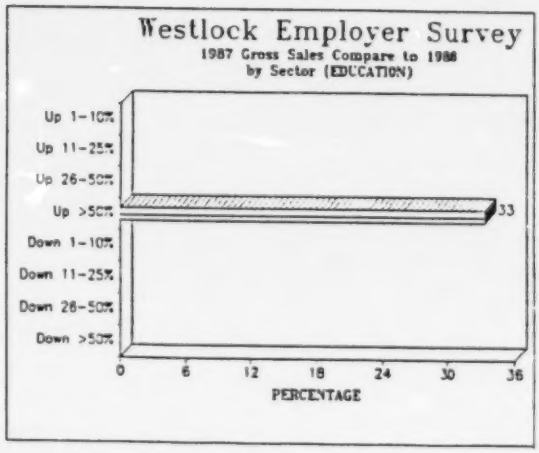

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (HEALTH SERVICES)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
38
13
0 4 8 12 16 20 24 28 32 36 40
PERCENTAGE

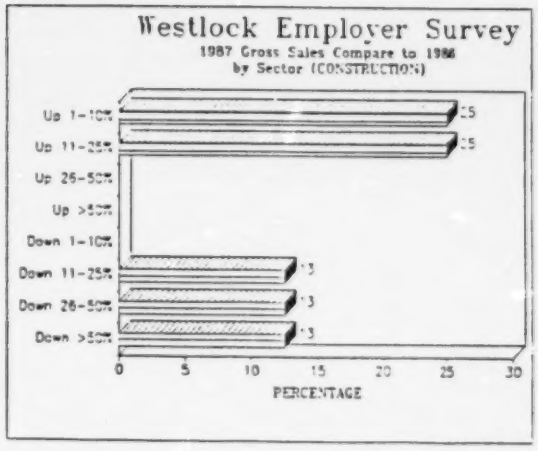

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (FOOD SERVICES)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
20
20
0 4 8 12 16 20 24 28 32 36 40
PERCENTAGE

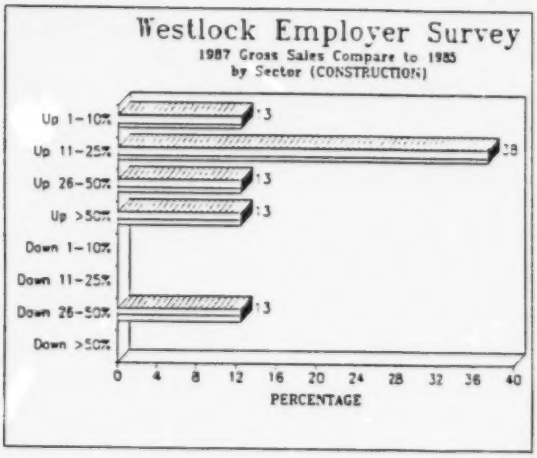

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (FOOD SERVICES)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20
PERCENTAGE

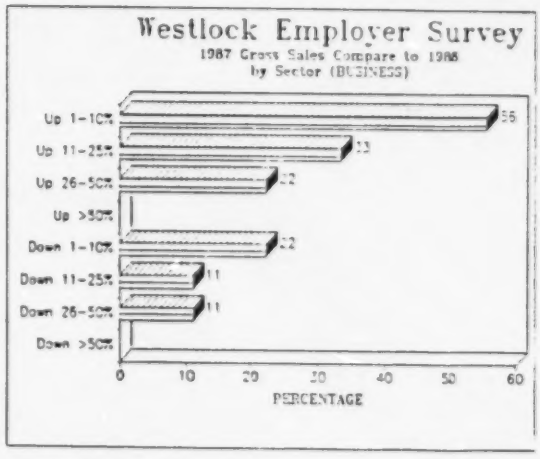

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (FINANCE SERVICES)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
17
17
0 3 6 9 12 15 18
PERCENTAGE

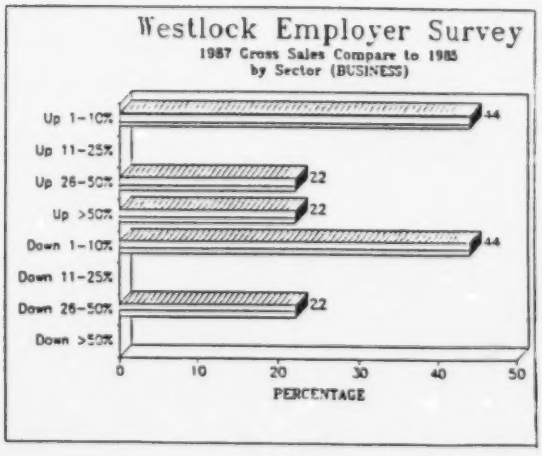

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (FINANCE SERVICES)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
17
0 3 6 9 12 15 18
PERCENTAGE

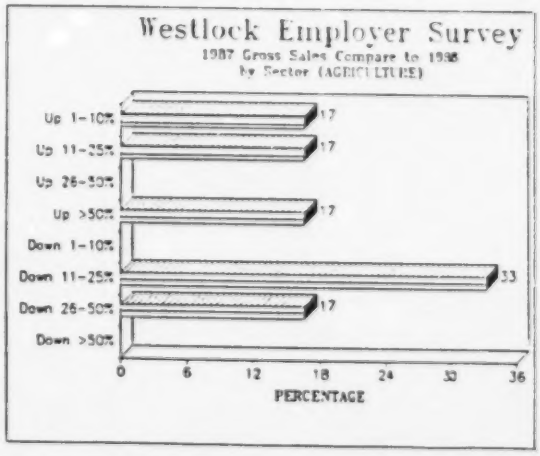

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1986
by Sector (EDUCATION)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
33
0 6 12 18 24 30 36
PERCENTAGE

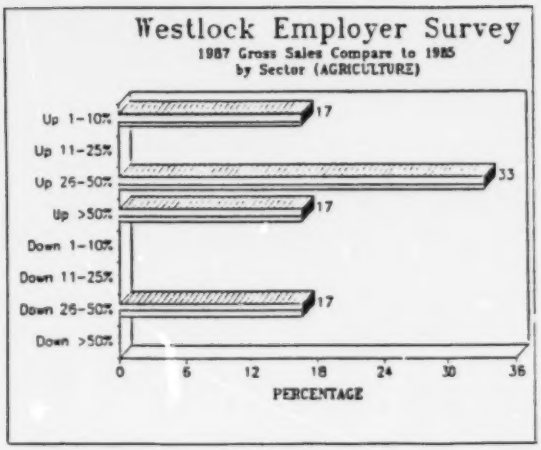

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1986
by Sector (CONSTRUCTION)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
25
25
13
13
13
0 5 10 15 20 25 30
PERCENTAGE

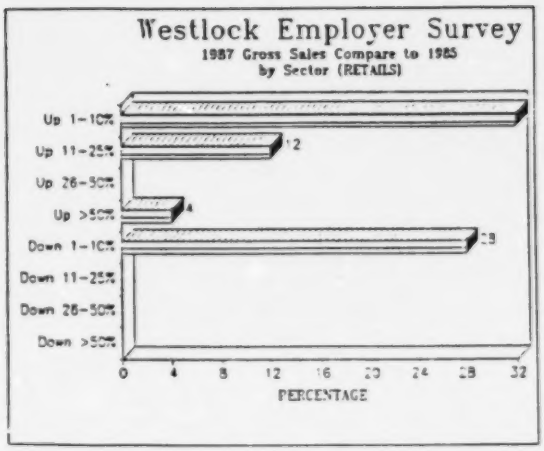

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (CONSTRUCTION)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
13
28
13
13
13
0 4 8 12 16 20 24 28 32 36 40
PERCENTAGE

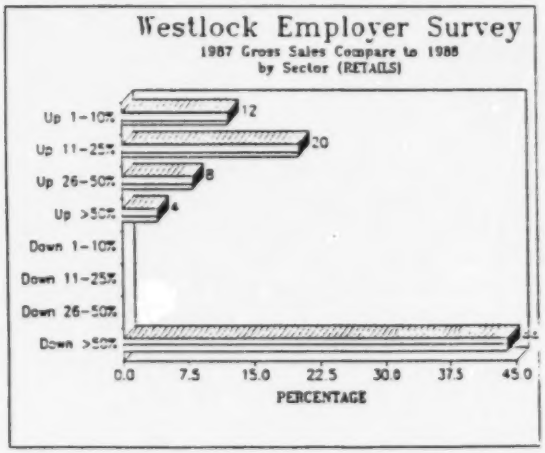

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1986
by Sector (BUSINESS)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
56
33
22
22
11
11
0 10 20 30 40 50 60
PERCENTAGE

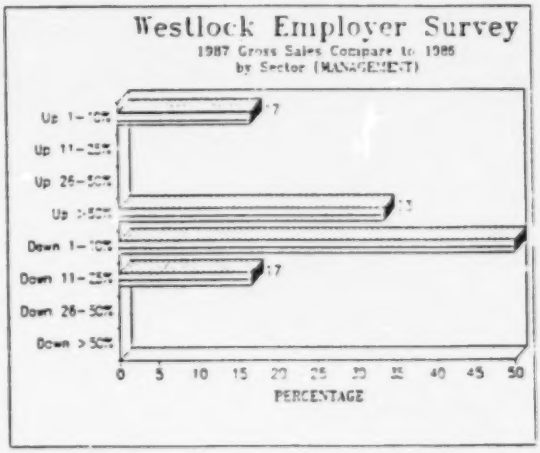

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (BUSINESS)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
44
22
22
44
22
0 10 20 30 40 50
PERCENTAGE

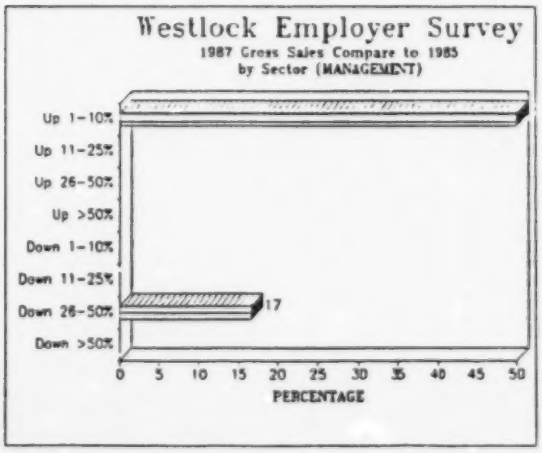

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1986
by Sector (AGRICULTURE)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
17
17
17
33
17
0 6 12 18 24 30 36
PERCENTAGE

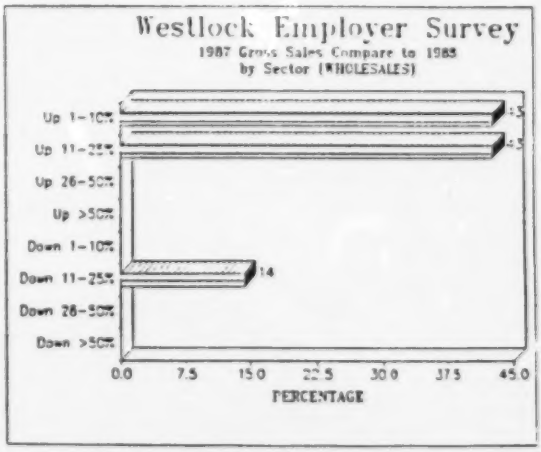

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (AGRICULTURE)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
17
33
17
17
0
6
12
18
24
30
36
PERCENTAGE

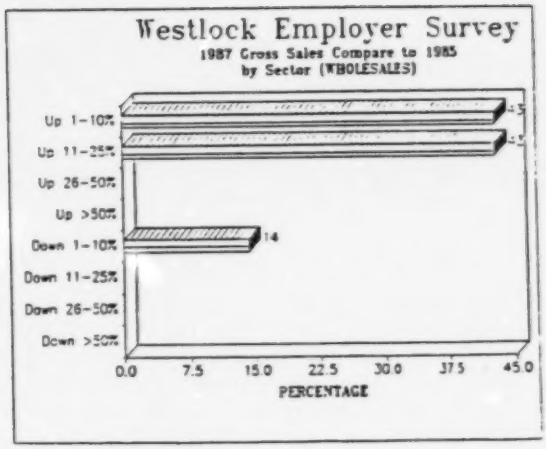

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (RETAILS)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
12
4
28
0
4
8
12
16
20
24
28
32
PERCENTAGE

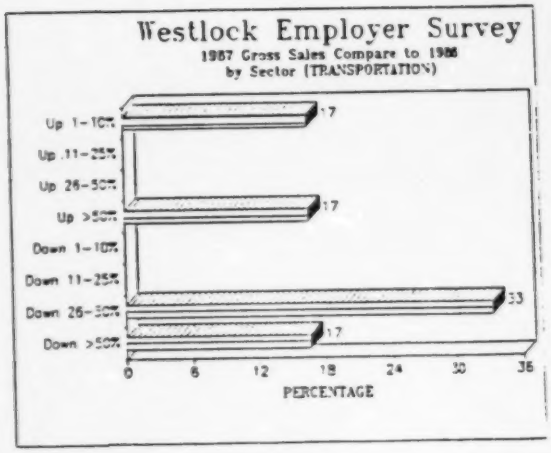

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (RETAILS)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
12
20
8
4
0.0
7.5
15.0
22.5
30.0
37.5
45.0
PERCENTAGE

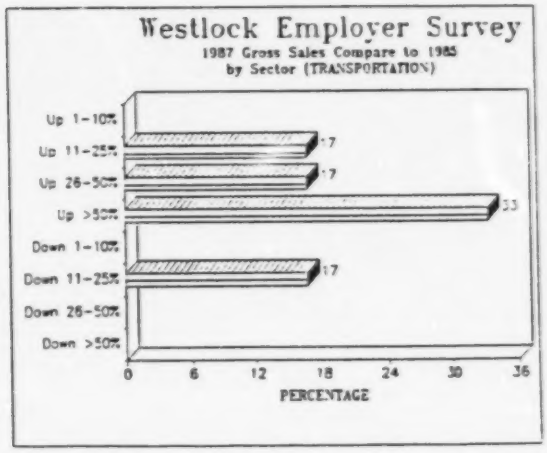

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (MANAGEMENT)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
17
17
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50
PERCENTAGE


Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (MANAGEMENT)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
17
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50
PERCENTAGE


Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (WHOLESALES)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
14
0.0
7.5
15.0
22.5
30.0
37.5
45.0
PERCENTAGE

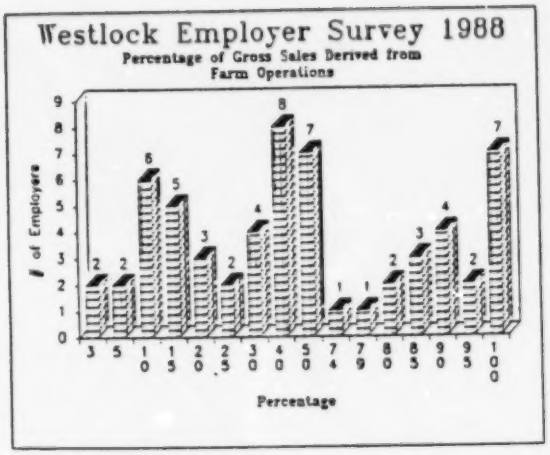

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (WHOLESALES)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
14
0.0
7.5
15.0
22.5
30.0
37.5
45.0
PERCENTAGE

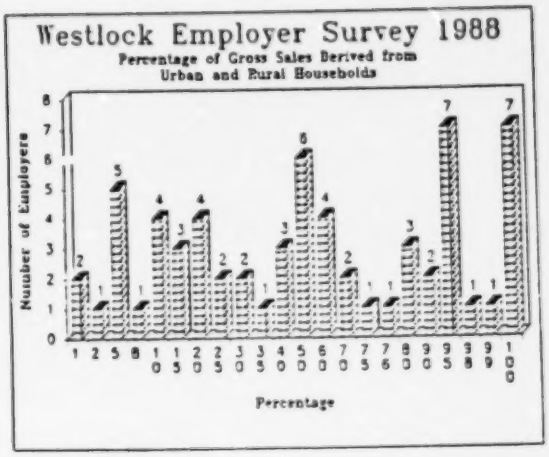

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (TRANSPORTATION)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
17
17
33
17
0
6
12
18
24
30
36
PERCENTAGE

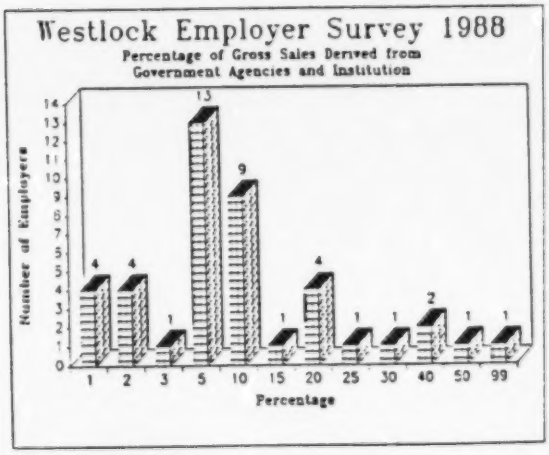

Westlock Employer Survey
1987 Gross Sales Compare to 1985
by Sector (TRANSPORTATION)
Up 1-10%
Up 11-25%
Up 26-50%
Up >50%
Down 1-10%
Down 11-25%
Down 26-50%
Down >50%
17
17
33
17
0
6
12
18
24
30
36
PERCENTAGE

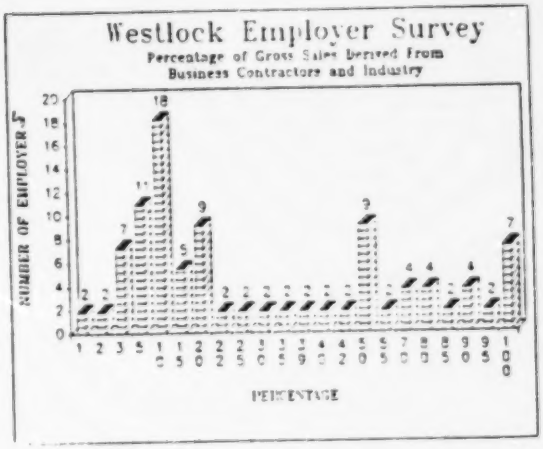
APPENDIX 2

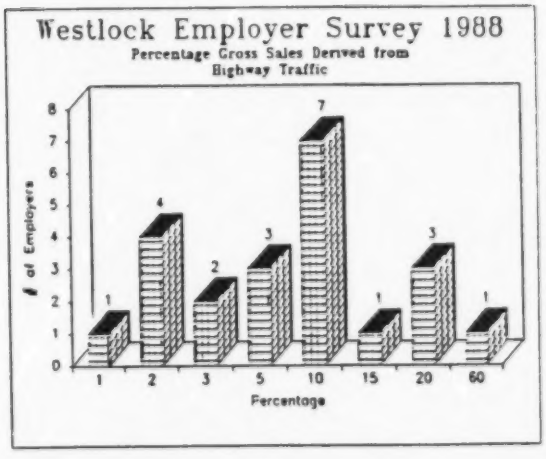
PERCENTAGES OF GROSS SALES FROM SELECTED SOURCES

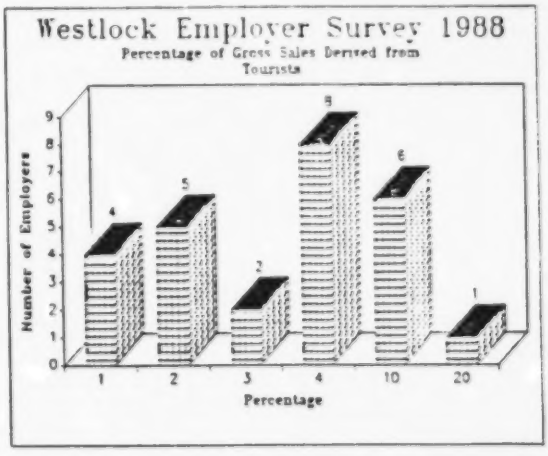

Westlock Employer Survey 1988
Percentage of Gross Sales Derived from
Farm Operations
# of Employers
Percentage


Westlock Employer Survey 1988
Percentage of Gross Sales Derived from
Urban and Rural Households
Number of Employers
Percentage


Westlock Employer Survey 1988
Percentage of Gross Sales Derived from
Government Agencies and Institution
Number of Employers
Percentage


Westlock Employer Survey
Percentage of Gross Sales Derived From
Business Contractors and Industry
NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS
PERCENTAGE


Westlock Employer Survey 1988
Percentage Gross Sales Derived from
Highway Traffic
# of Employers
Percentage


Westlock Employer Survey 1988
Percentage of Gross Sales Derived from
Tourists
Number of Employers
Percentage

APPENDIX 3

WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

WESTLOCK EMPLOYER SURVEY*

SURVEY FOR WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN
WESTLOCK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Employer _____ **Date** _____

Contact _____ **Position** _____ **Telephone** _____

* Your responses to this survey are voluntary and answers to each question will be aggregated to ensure confidentiality. The term "business/organization" refers to all business and service organizations including: small businesses, franchises, chain stores, home occupations, community organizations and government agencies.

1. What goods or services does your business/organization provide?

   Primary product or service _____

   Secondary product(s)/service(s) _____

2. How long have you been in operation in Westlock?

   ____ 2 years or less

   ____ 3 - 5 years

   ____ 6 - 10 years

   ____ 11 or more years

3. How many staff does your business/organization employ?

   Full time _____ (30 hrs. or more per week)

   Part time _____ (29 hours or less per week)

4. Why did you locate your business in Westlock? _____

   _____

5. What is your primary market area (origin of 80% or more of sales, or clientele)? (If there is more than one, please rank with 1 being most important, 2 the second, etc.).

   __ Town of Westlock

   __ M.D. of Westlock

   __ Other(s) (please specify)

6. Where does most of your competition originate from? (check one)

__ Westlock

__ Other Town (specify) _____

__ Metropolitan Edmonton

__ Don't know/not applicable

7. How would you say last year's gross sales (1987) compare with the following:

	1986	1985
Down more than 50%	____	____
Down between 26-50%	____	____
Down between 11-25%	____	____
Down between 1-10%	____	____
Up more than 50%	____	____
Up between 26-50%	____	____
Up between 11-25%	____	____
Up between 1-10%	____	____

8. In general terms, what % of your gross sales are derived from:

Government agencies/institutions	____
Business contractors, industry	____
Farm operations	____
Households (urban and rural)	____
Tourists	____
Highway traffic	____

9. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following services and characteristics of Westlock.

Facilities/Services

Water/Sewer _____

Roads _____

Housing _____

Fire Protection _____

Cultural Activities/Facilities _____

Health/Medical Care _____

Police Protection _____

Education _____

Retail/Commercial Services _____

Chamber of Commerce _____

Town Council _____

Westlock Economic Development Committee _____

Local Provincial M.L.A. _____

Local Federal M.P. _____

Neighbourliness/Friendliness _____

Visual Appearance of Town _____

Size of Town _____

Local Cost of Living _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

Are you satisfied with Provincial/Federal offices/programs, etc. in Westlock?

___ Yes

___ No

If no, please explain _____

_____

_____

All things considered, how satisfied are you to be located in the Town of Westlock (scale 1-6 with 1 being completely satisfied and 6 not satisfied at all).

1 2 3 4 5 6

10. What would you say are the three most important problems or disadvantages to operating a business/organization in Westlock? (in order of priority).

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

11. What would you say are the three advantages or strengths to operating a business/organization in Westlock? (in order of priority).

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

12. What do you think are the long-term prospects for your business in Westlock? (Please rate on scale of 1-5 with 1 being Excellent and 5 Poor.)

1 2 3 4 5

Please explain _____

_____

_____

13. Will your business/organization be purchasing goods/services from outside Westlock in the next year that you would consider acquiring locally if available at competitive prices?

____ Yes

____ No

If yes, please list the product/service _____

_____

14. Does your operation have surplus capacity in any of the following areas which you would be interested in marketing?

Yes	No		
___	___	Manpower (If yes, please specify #'s & skills)	_____
___	___	Specific processes (If yes, please specify)	_____
___	___	Space (If yes, how many sq. ft.?) retail	_____
		industrial	_____
		office	_____
___	___	Products/services (If yes, please specify)	_____

15. What are your plans for your business/organization in the next 1-2 years? (Check more than one if applicable.)

1. Expand business/organization _____
2. Renovate/modernize _____
3. Diversify type of goods/services _____
4. Remain as is _____
5. Move to another location in Westlock _____
6. Move business to other community _____
7. Sell business _____
8. Close business _____
9. Other (describe) _____

_____

_____

16. What critical factors would have to change before you would consider expansion or diversification in the next 1 to 2 years?

_____

_____

_____

_____

17. (a) Does your existing business/organization require additional manpower?

___ Yes
___ No

(If yes, please specify)
# of Staff _____ Skills_____

(b) What are your projected additional manpower needs in the next 2 years?

# of Staff _____ Skills_____

18. Could your business/organization benefit from assistance in the following areas?

Yes	No	
___	___	Marketing promotions, merchandising, or displays
___	___	Staff training or retraining (please specify) _____
___	___	Financial planning assistance
___	___	Information on government programs
___	___	Management advice
___	___	Expansion/diversification planning assistance
___	___	Zoning or by-law changes
___	___	Other (please specify) _____

19. Can you identify any viable business opportunities, or community service programs or facilities which would strengthen the business community in Westlock and create new jobs?

__ Yes
__ No

If yes, what would they be? _____

_____

_____

20. Would you be prepared to contribute your time, energy, or financial assistance to programs and activities aimed at improving the Westlock business community?

__ Yes
__ No

21. As Tourism could play a major part in strengthening the business community, any ideas you may have on how you or others can get tourists to stop, shop, and stay in Westlock, would be most helpful.

_____

_____

_____

_____

THANK-YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION AND ASSISTANCE.

IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT, ANDREW LOOSLEY (349-5280), MARJORIE DUCHARME (349-4188), OR RON CAMPBELL (349-4444).

PLEASE DROP OFF THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE AT THE WESTLOCK TOWN OFFICE OR MAIL TO: P.O. BOX 2220, WESTLOCK, ALBERTA TOG 2L0.